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Evangelistic Sermonettes



WM. COWAN BOYD

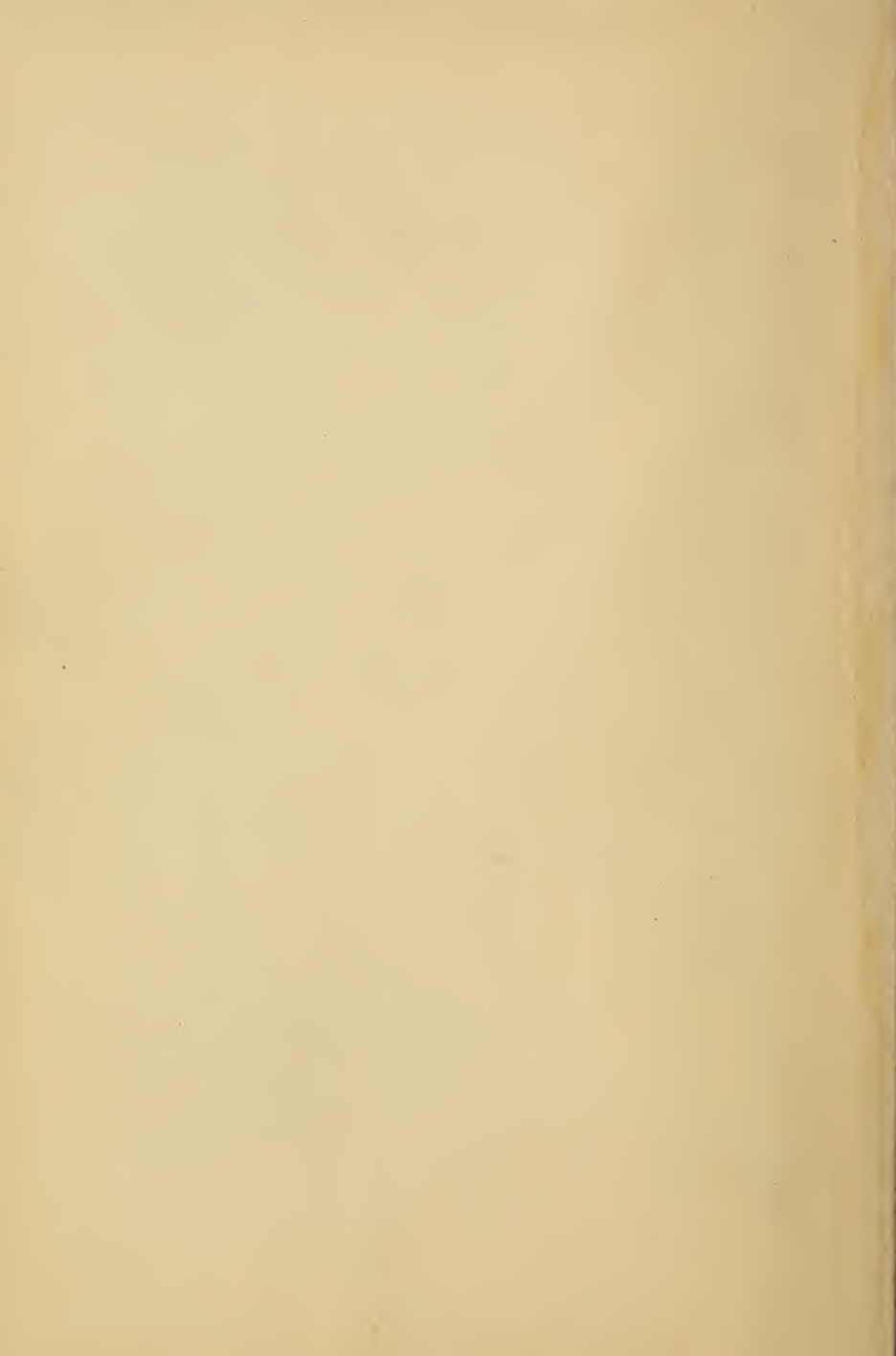


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EVANGELISTIC SERMONETTES

BY
REV. WM. COWAN BOYD

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To all who obey the divine injunction, "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature," this little volume of evangelistic sermonettes is affectionately dedicated.

W. C. B.

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HE SAVED OTHERS

Matthew 27:42

He saved others.

This is one of the truest statements that was ever uttered by an enemy of Christ. There was scarcely a home in the land of the Prophets but felt the gracious influence of the Son of God. Their dead were raised; their sick were cured; their hungry were fed, and their broken-hearted were comforted by Him. He saved then and He saves now, for He is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever.

My line of thought at this time will be very largely to the Christian.

1st. Christ saves from a wasted life.

When one comes to Christ and becomes His follower, it is then that his life means more than it ever did before. Look for instance at John Bunyan in sin, the greatest swearer and all-around sinner in his home-town, but look at Bunyan in Christ,—immortal dreamer, a matchless soul-winner, a fearless preacher and one of the greatest prose-poets that ever made the gospel his song or the redemption of the world the passion of his heart. Look at Jerry McCauley sitting in a back alley, an outcast, not of what we call respectable society, but of the scum of New York slums. See this same man in Christ, with sins

pardoned and past exploits blotted out of God's book of remembrance, founding what to this day is called the Jerry McCauley Mission, within whose walls hundreds of brands have been plucked from the burning. Look at Zaccheus, wealthy, self-exalted (for he was up a tree, and that is where every self-exalted person is), his God riches, his aim to defraud those with whom he has commercial dealings. See him in Christ, humble, for he came down the tree; generous, for he gave the half of his goods to feed the poor, and four-fold for every dollar gotten by fraud.

God takes all kinds of men whose lives are being wasted, and if they will only let Him, He makes them a credit to their home-town, a valuable asset to the nation, and a power in the church.

“I gave my life for thee,
My precious blood I shed,
That thou mightest ransomed be
And quickened from the dead.
I gave my life for thee;
What hast thou given for me?”

2nd. Christ saves from evil environment.

His command through Paul, to the Christian everywhere, is “Come out from among them; be ye separate; touch not the unclean thing.” The hymn-writer had that thought in mind. I am sure, when he wrote—

“Shun evil companions,
Bad language disdain,
God's name hold in reverence,
Don't take it in vain.”

There are multitudes of people today in every country who are never seen in bad company; but yet their environment is not what God would have it, for they read literature which is far from being healthful to Christian growth.

Dr. Talmage says, "What do you make of the fact that fifty per cent of the criminals in the jails and penitentiaries of this country are under twenty-one years of age? You go along the corridors of the prisons and you will find that nine out of ten came there from reading bad books or newspapers. The men and women will tell you so. Is not that a fact worthy the consideration of those whose families are dear to them?"

"Years ago there came forth a French authoress under the assumed name of George Sand; she smoked cigars, she wore masculine apparel; she wrote with a style ardent, eloquent, graphic in its pictures, horrible in its suggestions, damnable in its results, and sending forth into the libraries and the homes of the world an influence that has not yet relaxed. Under the nostrils of your cities there is today a fetid, reeking, unwashed literature enough to poison all the fountains of virtue, and smite your sons and daughters as with the wings of a destroying angel. Cursed are the books which make impurity decent and crime horrible, and hypocrisy noble. Ye authors who write them, ye publishers who print them, ye booksellers who distribute them, shall be cut to pieces; if not by

an aroused public sentiment, then by Almighty God, who will sweep you to the lowest pit of perdition, ye murderers of souls.’’

A young man when dying a few years ago, gave as a reason for his wickedness the fact that early in life he became very much interested in Ingersoll’s “Mistakes of Moses.” Benjamin Franklin said that the reading of Cotton Mather’s essay, “To do good,” moulded his entire life. May the Lord deliver us from the evil environment of bad or even questionable literature, and may we infuse enthusiasm into the dissemination of literature calculated to bless mankind.

3rd. The Lord saves from the stagnant influence of tradition.

I know that we are heirs to the accomplishments of forgotten ages, but we must press on toward the mark for the prize which will be presented to the faithful. When President Eliot became the head of Harvard University, he made some changes in the handling of affairs connected with that institution. Some of the officials were not pleased and began to find fault, but under his administration Harvard grew from a membership of 400 to 5,000 with a faculty as large as the entire membership was when he took charge.

When a young man became superintendent of a little Sunday School he changed the chairs around, which made the room present a different appearance.

Some of the teachers and members of the church began to criticize, but his efforts were blessed to a great extent and the attendance increased with almost every session. I do not say that it was the changing of the chairs that brought the results, but I do say that the attitude of that young man demonstrated the fact that he was not going to be buried in a rut, as evidently his predecessors were. Napoleon and Grant paid very little attention to rules which govern military strategy, and were often denounced, but Napoleon became the greatest military man of his time and Grant stopped the Civil War. Their motto was "Forward regardless of precedent," and this determination, combined with good common-sense, helped them to win where others failed.

I am sure that my Lord can save from a wasted life, evil environment and the stagnant influence of tradition.

CHRIST AND ZACCHEUS

Luke 19:5

Come down, for today I must abide
at thy house.

Christ was on his way to Jericho, and a great crowd surrounded him. Zaccheus, a rich publican, was very anxious to see him. He felt that he had a poor chance of doing so, because of his size—being very small of stature, and because of the greatness of the crowd—but so determined was he to see this great wonder-worker that he ran before the people and climbed up a tree so that he could look down upon Christ as He passed.

When the Saviour came to the place, He looked up and said, “Zaccheus, make haste and come down, for today I must abide at thy house.” This message of nineteen hundred years ago is a message to many men and women today.

1st. Zaccheus was a seeking sinner.

I don't say that he was a seeking sinner in the sense in which we often speak of such, but he wanted to see Jesus and he simply pushed aside anything which stood between him and that accomplishment. When a sinner starts out to look for Christ it won't be long before he finds Him, whether it be curiosity

on his part or a real determination to come into spiritual contact with God's only Son.

Zaccheus was not only a sinner, but he was a publican and detested by the Jews, but that did not hinder Christ extending to him an opportunity to come into the kingdom. There is no one too far away from God to be reached by Christ and His gospel.

In the city of New York, a short time ago, there lived a man who was as vile as could be found anywhere. In fact, he was so vile that even his own class detested his company and threatened to ostracize him. But one day God's Spirit awakened him to a realization of his awful condition and drew his attention to Christ as his only hope. He immediately sought to see Jesus, and he had not long to wait, for Christ is not very far from any one of us. He found Him in the Bible, and was so captivated by His charming personality and offer of regeneration, that he at once gave himself up, body and soul, into His keeping. Today he is one of the most successful Christian workers in that city, a soul winner of great power.

There is one thing that ought to encourage the sinner, and that is, that Christ is not only a Saviour, but a seeking one. Hear Him as He says, "I came to seek and to save that which was lost."

2nd. Zaccheus was a determined sinner.

When he saw the crowd and thought of his small stature he might have said, "There is no use in try-

ing; I won't be able to see Him anyway," but his determination enabled him to overcome those obstacles, and soon he was in a position to see Jesus.

A good many young men and women whose chance for success may seem very small to them; if they only had a little of the kind of determination which Zaccheus possessed they would soon win in life. Julius Caesar wrote his famous Commentaries in moments that he snatched from the cares and toils of military campaigns. Robert Bloomfield's literary acquirements were made when he was learning the trade of a shoemaker, and afterward while he worked at the same business as a journeyman. When Albert Barnes first thought of preparing his commentary on the Bible, his hands were full; but finally he decided to accomplish the great work by rising and spending an hour before breakfast upon it. He made spare moments for the emergency, and in this way finished one of the greatest productions on the Bible that has ever been written. It was determination that made them successful, and it is a mighty asset for any man to possess, either in the commercial or spiritual life.

The story is told of a young girl who was threatened with expulsion from home if she persisted in attending church. But threats could not intimidate her determined heart, for every Sunday she went to service. Finally her ungodly parents concluded that she had something worth while which they lacked

and which they ought to have. They decided to go with her to church where the gospel was preached in simplicity, and very soon became interested in the Christ who had blessed and made her young life beautiful.

May God give unto us the determined spirit in service for Him.

3rd. Zaccheus became a reformed sinner.

Listen to him as he comes down the tree to where Christ was: "If I have taken anything from any man by false accusation I restore unto him fourfold." Contact with Christ makes a man uncomfortable until he rectifies as nearly as possible that which he has wronged.

In the United States we have a fund known as a "Conscience Fund," and it is remarkable how that fund is swelled at times. Men who have robbed their fellows and who don't like to go back to them with the spoils, send the money to that fund, and in doing so alleviate the pangs of their conscience. Zaccheus went right to those from whom he had stolen, and gave fourfold for all he had taken. I admire him for his straightforwardness. You cannot be a Christian and steal, or do anything that is wrong without suffering. Our prayer should be, "God, keep me in a plain straight path."

The Earl of Hopetown, in Scotland, has an old brass-bound leather-covered ledger, which he prizes very highly. It belonged to John Hope, the founder

of the family, who had a shop in Edinburgh two hundred years ago. The first entry in that ledger reads, "Lord, keep me and this book honest." If every merchant since had adopted John Hope's practice, there would certainly be a higher standard of commercial morality than at present exists in the business world.

The religion of Christ always reforms bad men and makes those who are moral better. As Christ came to Zaccheus with a blessing so long ago, He comes to you today with the blessing you need. Will you come to Him and appropriate it?

Do not delay. Now is the accepted time, and now is the day of salvation.

A ROYAL INVITATION AND HOW IT WAS TREATED

Luke 14:17

Come, for all things are now ready, and they all
with one consent began to make excuse.

A rich man in the East, at great expense, provided a supper and invited many to it, but, strange to say, when the time came for the arrival of the guests not one came, but all sent excuses. One said, "I have bought a piece of ground, and I must go and see it; I pray thee have me excused." If he bought the ground without seeing it or having some competent person see it for him he reminds me of a man in Minneapolis. A number of years ago this man invested in a piece of real estate without seeing it. Three months after the business transaction he went to look at his property, but when he arrived he was very much humiliated to find it located at the bottom of Lake Harriet, described as being very good soil but just a little too wet.

Another said, "I have bought five yoke of oxen and I must go and prove them. I pray thee have me excused." If he invested in the oxen without trying them, he proved himself to be a very poor business

man, and I am not sure that his host lost very much through his absence.

The third said, "I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come." He must have been a model husband, and I have thought that it would be a good thing for this and other countries if husbands were as much devoted to their wives as he apparently was, and not quite so much interested in other men's wives. A man on one occasion asked John McNeil where Cain got his wife, and McNeil told him that he was so much interested in his own wife that he never had had any time to turn his attention to Cain's wife.

I am sure that the spiritual application of this old-time story must be seen by every Christian. God, at a tremendous cost, has prepared a feast for all included in "Whosoever," and has sent His servants into the world to issue the invitations. This has been going on for nineteen hundred years, many have responded by coming, while many more have absented themselves and sent excuses.

I wish at this time to speak briefly of some of the excuses with which we meet in trying to influence men and women to come to this great gospel feast, where humanity alone can find satisfaction.

1st. I don't need salvation, for I have never done anything worthy of condemnation.

I don't care how good man may be, I am sure that he is not any better than Nicodemus was, and Christ

said to him, "Ye must be born again." I question it very much if there is one in the world today who can say with the young ruler, "All these have I observed from my youth," meaning some of the commandments; and yet Christ said to him, "Yet lackest thou one thing."

When the Duke of Kent, Queen Victoria's father, was on his death-bed he expressed some concern as to his personal salvation. His physician tried to comfort him by talking of his honorable life and the distinguished position in which Providence had placed him. The Duke stopped him by saying, "It is not that. If I am to participate in the marriage supper of the Lamb, I can only get there as a poor sinner trusting in an all sufficient Saviour." The Duke was right, and the sooner man believes as he did the sooner will there be a rush toward God's great supper table.

2nd. There are a good many in the church who are no better than I.

America is the greatest nation in the world in my estimation, and no nation has more crooks. Because this is so, is that any reason why I should not become a citizen? An Irishman was seeking to become a citizen of this country, and when he went to get his papers the clerk asked him if he had read the Constitution. The Irishman said, "No, I haven't even seen it." "Have you read the Declaration of Independence?" said the clerk; and to his surprise

the applicant for citizenship had not read that either. Somewhat aroused by the Irishman's ignorance, he said, "Will you please tell me what you have read?" The answer was, "I have red hair on the top of me head." I understand he got his papers. He had not read the Constitution of this country, nor had he any knowledge of the Declaration of Independence, but he had an earnest desire to become a citizen of the world's greatest republic, and because there were crooks in the country he was not going to stay out. The excuse for not coming to this gospel feast because there are some in the church whose life does not tally with their profession, is a very weak one indeed. It would be well to look for a better one.

3rd. I have often said that I would not become a Christian nor ally myself with the church during a revival. Why such a foolish resolution? Don't you know that the revival is of God? Have you ever thought of that great revival in Egypt when God, through the instrumentality of Moses and Aaron, brought out from the tyranny of Pharaoh and sent toward the promised land three million of His children?

Look at the story of Pentecost recorded in the second chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. There we find three thousand persons coming into the Kingdom of God in one day. Think of the revival in this country in '57 and in Great Britain in '59, when

thousands of men and women came and partook of this gospel feast.

For Christ's sake and your own good, don't make any more silly excuses, but come, for all things are now ready; or, as the poet has put it:

“Come, for the feast is spread;
Hark to the call!
Come for the living bread,
Broken for all.

Come to His house of wine,
Low on His breast recline,
All that He hath is thine;
Come, sinner, come.

Come where the fountain flows—
River of life,
Healing for all thy woes,
Doubting and strife:

Millions have been supplied,
No one was e'er denied;
Come to the crimson tide;
Come, sinner, come.’’

THE LOVE OF GOD

Rom. 5:8

God commandeth His love toward us, in that,
while we were yet sinners, Christ
died for us.

On one occasion Charles Spurgeon, the great London preacher, went out into the suburbs of that city to visit one of the deacons of his church. When he got there he discovered that the deacon had built a new barn, and on the weather-vane of that barn he had printed this sentence, "God is love." Standing there, Spurgeon began to wonder what his deacon really meant by having such a sentence on the weather-vane of his barn. When he met the deacon he asked him if he meant to convey the idea to all who passed that God's love is as changeable as the wind that blows. He was agreeably surprised when the deacon said, "No, but I mean to convey the idea that God is love, no matter which way the wind blows." Man may trample this love under his feet and rush headlong to ruin, but it remains the same.

I think that the most beautiful lines on this subject that I have ever read are the following:

“Could we with ink the ocean fill,
And were the sky of parchment made,
Were every blade of grass a quill
And every man a scribe by trade,
To write the love of God above
Would drain the ocean dry;
Nor could the scroll contain the whole,
Though stretched from sky to sky.”

I wish to speak of three ways by which God shows his love for man:

1st. By pardoning his sin.

“If we confess our sin, He is faithful and just to forgive us, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

In Daniel Webster’s day there lived an old man whose name was Colby; so wicked was this man that everybody who knew him thought that he and his wickedness were so inseparable that they would lie down in the grave together. But, contrary to what everybody expected, the love of God captured his wicked heart one day, and John Colby resolved that by God’s grace his life from that time would be clean and honorable. The change was so pronounced that everyone was surprised. But it lasted and became greater in its power as the days went by. Daniel Webster used to say, “If any man wants to know what the love of God can do, let him look at John Colby.” Well might the poet sing:

“God loved the world of sinners lost,
And ruined by the fall;
Salvation full at highest cost
He offers free to all.”

2nd. By using the rod.

“Whom the Lord loveth, them He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth.”

This punishment will be administered in more than one way, perhaps. Some are smitten with an accusing conscience, and some with physical illness, others with bereavement, and still others with financial reverses.

“God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform.”

But there are thousands of people in the world today who will rise and tell us in testimony meetings how God laid His rod upon them, and how they now appreciate the punishment which He administered. One of the most powerful testimonies that I have ever heard was given by a man who had been a backslider. He told us that while he was living a lukewarm life that he neither enjoyed the company of God's people nor the company of those who were openly wicked. He was of all men most miserable, so miserable that one night he was about to commit suicide, when the still small voice of God's Spirit whispered: “Return unto Me and I will heal your backsliding.” He returned, and God in His infinite mercy forgave him, and the night that I heard his testimony was the eve of his departure for India, where he was going as a missionary.

The Latin poet Juvenal was right when he wrote :

“Trust me no torture that the poets feign,
Can match the fierce, unutterable pain,
He feels, who night and day, devoid of rest,
Carries his own accuser in his breast.”

3rd. By sacrifice.

“God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

I have read of a patriot's love for his country, and of a mother's love for her child, but I have never outside the Bible read of a father sacrificing his only begotten son in order that his enemies might be benefited. Yet, this is what God has done for a world gone mad in wickedness and rebellion.

“If one fond mother in her heart possessed
Maternal love within a single breast,
Of all the mothers since the world began,
'Twere nothing like the love of God to man.”

I often wonder how much we really appreciate the great love wherewith He has loved us, and the interest He has shown in trying to bring us back into His fold. The best way to show our gratefulness is by accepting His Son to be our Saviour, and walking in His footsteps till the end of life. It will not always be easy, but then it is gloriously worth while.

Wendell Phillips was lecturing in a town twelve miles outside Boston one night. When the meeting had ended it was very dark and cold, and the last

train had gone. His friends rallied around him and tried to induce him to stay in Boston till morning. They spoke of the distance, the darkness, the cold, and the dangers of the journey, that at that time of the night could only be made by horse and buggy. When they had exhausted their efforts to induce him, he looked at them and with eyes sparkling, said, "I know all that, but at the end I shall see Annie Phillips, and I must go."

So, my friends, at the end of the Christian life we shall see the King in His beauty, and in the meantime may we "Labor for the Master, from the dawn till setting sun."

WILT THOU BE MADE WHOLE?

John 5:6

Wilt thou be made whole?

The interesting story found in this chapter is one which has been blest to thousands of men and women in days gone by. Just outside Jerusalem we are told there was a mysterious pool known as the "Pool of Bethesda." It was mysterious in that at a certain season of the year an angel descended into it and troubled the water, and whoever stepped into it first after the water was troubled was made whole of whatever disease he had.

Christ was passing this pool on His way to Jerusalem, and saw a man beside it who had been afflicted by an infirmity for thirty-eight years, and, going up to the poor fellow, said: "Wilt thou be made whole?" He was met with the answer, "Sir, I have no man when the water is troubled to put me into the pool, but while I am coming another steppeth down before me." Jesus said unto him, "Rise, take up thy bed and walk," and immediately the man was made whole and did as he was told.

The subject which draws our attention from this narrative is the "Impotency of man without Christ,"

and I wish to speak of impotency in the individual, in the church, and in the home.

1st. The individual.

Every man in the spiritual sense is impotent until he comes into contact with Christ, the great magnet, and every man who is touched with that magnet has a peculiar power imparted to him. A man in trouble once wrote to a friend, saying, "I am in a hole and I want you to come and pull me out." His friend replied, "I am sorry that I can't help you, old fellow, but if you are in a hole that you can't get out of, I am coming to see that hole; it must be a wonder." That is the kind of treatment that a harsh world often gives, but not so with Christ, for

"He is near
To comfort and cheer
Just when we need Him most."

The parable of the Good Samaritan illustrates what Christ is willing and able to do for the down-and-out spiritually, and there are thousands of men in the Christian ranks today who testify to the fact that, though wounded and bruised by sin and Satan and shunned by many church members, Christ, in His loving-kindness, healed them and gave unto them power to grow strong in the Lord, and an elasticity to run and not be weary in Christian service.

My friend, if you are impotent in the service of the King, you don't have to remain so, for while you

read this the Holy Spirit is near to do more for you than you anticipate if you will ask Him.

Mr. Moody was engaged in Sunday School work for several years, but was helpless in the way of much accomplishment until he admitted his weakness and relied entirely on God's power. Then, as one has eloquently spoken, "He put one hand on America and the other on Europe, and both continents moved toward the Lamb of God."

2nd. The church.

If I were asked the question, "Why is it that the church is so impotent in this age?" my answer would be this: "Because she has not been using her God-given power." She has been acting, like Jonah, in willful disobedience on many occasions. God has demanded of her certain service, and because that service appeared hard she has turned about and gone in the opposite direction. She has been acting like Samson, who lost his strength by placing his head in Delilah's lap; worldly amusement and church service will never work well together. She has been acting like Ananias and Sapphira, who lied regarding their gifts or contributions toward Christian extension. If the church would become the power in this age that the early church was, then she had better make the first church an earnest study. The early church was a praying church; it was a studious church, and it was perfectly natural for it to become a powerful church.

A young man preached for Dr. Broughton some time ago; he was young and timid; the congregation did not expect much, and he knew it. Just before the service began Broughton went into his study, and there he found the young man prostrate on the floor in prayer. Needless to say, he preached a powerful sermon. The people inquired, "Where did he get such power?" and the answer was: He got it from God. He was a prayerful man, therefore a powerful man.

Broughton says, "I went on one occasion to hear a distinguished preacher, but was disappointed when an old man stood before me that day as preacher. He was very seedy looking, but he had not gone far before I was with him. I walked with him on the platform, I gestured with him, I cried with him, and I laughed with him; and why? because he knew his Bible. He was a studious man, therefore a powerful man in the pulpit." And I am of the opinion that when the church cuts loose from worldly amusement and exaggeration and is noted for obedience in service, prayerful and studious, that no longer will she be looked upon as being impotent.

3rd. The home.

Why is it that the home, in many cases, has become impotent? Without any hesitation, I answer: Because of the removal of the family altar, and the adoption of the card table. I have yet to meet a card-playing Christian who amounts to a cent in aggressive Christian work.

Again, fathers and mothers will, in the home, and before their children, criticize every church officer, from pastor to janitor, and then foolishly wonder why their boys and girls won't become Christians. More than once fathers and mothers have come to me and with tears in their eyes asked me to preach a sermon against card-playing, and try to get their children, especially their boys, back to church. Of course, I couldn't do much, for they taught their boys to play cards, and turned them against the church by their foolish criticism.

A farmer in North Carolina once drove with two highly mettled horses into town. He was just about to enter a store when the horses became frightened and began to dash down the street. When they were brought to a stand-still and friends rushed to rescue the bleeding and mangled body of the man, one stooped over him and tenderly asked, "Why did you sacrifice yourself for horses and wagon?" He gasped, as his spirit took its flight, "Go and look in the wagon." They looked, and there asleep in the straw lay his little boy. As they laid the dead hero in his grave no one said the sacrifice was too great.

When fathers and mothers become as much interested in saving the souls of their boys and girls as that man was in saving the body of his son, it will not be long until home impotency is replaced by home power.

May that day soon come.

CHRIST OR BARABBAS

Matthew 27:21

Whether of the twain will ye that I
release unto you?

God has given unto every sane man and woman the power to choose.

There are times in the life of every one when it is absolutely necessary to make a choice. This is so not only in connection with material things, but also with regard to spiritual things. There are at least two kinds of choice, good and bad, and to these I wish to call your attention largely by illustration.

1st. Bad choices.

When God made the world and put our first parents in its most beautiful part, he said unto them, "Of every tree in the garden thou may'st freely eat, but of the tree of knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat, for in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."

No sooner had God given them that command and left the garden than Satan entered, armed with first-class subtlety, and began his destructive work with, "Thou shalt not surely die for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof ye shall be as Gods, knowing good and evil."

Now God has given His command and Satan has had his say, and the first pair of human beings are doing some thinking. The tree was pleasant to the eye; it was good for food. It was looked upon as being able to make one wise. The moment to choose has come and the forbidden fruit is taken, and a choice has been made that ruined a race, "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners."

And so the first choice on record is a bad one. A good many years later another choice was about to be made, for the servants of Abraham and the servants of Lot were not living on the most agreeable terms, and Abraham, being a lover of peace, was determined to have it regardless of material loss. After weighing the matter carefully he went to Lot with this proposition, "Let there be no strife between thy herd-men and my herd-men. Is not the whole land before you? Lift up your eyes and look, and if you wish to go North then I will go South, and if you wish to go East then I will go West." Lot lifted up his eyes and beheld the well-watered plains of Jordan. These he chose and pitched his tent toward Sodom. The businessmen, I suppose, thought that Lot made a good choice, but it was the worst thing he ever did. The men of Sodom were wicked and we fear that too much contact with them robbed Lot of much of his piety, and reduced his influence for good to almost nothing.

Sodom was destroyed, Lot's possessions in that

city were burned, his wife reduced to a worthless monument and his sons-in-law scoffed at his warning.

His choice looked good to begin with, but it really ranks among the worst ever made.

We now come to the choice of the text, Whether of the twain will ye that I release unto you?

This is a choice between the Son of God and one of the worst of the sons of men.

Barabbas was known to the people as a murderer. Christ had healed their sick and raised their dead; his life was free from sin.

Pilate, the Roman Governor, put to them the question at the top of this sermon and their answer records the choice that sent to Calvary God's own Son.

2nd. Good choices.

The first one to which I ask your attention was that made by Moses. By faith, Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than all the treasures of Egypt, for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward.

Joshua, who succeeded Moses as leader of the Israelites out of the wilderness into the land of Canaan, realized that his end was near, and he wanted his followers to renew their covenant with God; gathering all the tribes of Israel to Shechem he narrated to

them the blessings which had been bestowed upon them, finishing with, "And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the Gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood or the Gods of the Amorites in whose land ye dwell; but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

I am certain that some real thinking was done while Joshua was talking, and when he closed his speech it didn't take them long to decide, for they said, "God forbid that we should forsake the Lord to serve other Gods."

When Horace Bushnell was awakened to think seriously regarding his attitude toward God and the influence for evil that he was exerting over the young men of Yale (where he was the most popular teacher), by his stand on the subject of Christ, he went to his room one night and locking the door, he dropped to his knees and asked God for guidance, assuring him that if he were convinced that Christ was his son and the world's Redeemer, he would accept Him as his saviour and serve Him as such before the world. In a short time, by reading the four accounts given in the gospels of the life work of Jesus, he was satisfied that he was God's Son and the only Saviour of man. The time had come for him to make a choice and he chose Christ and many of the students of Yale followed his example.

I have set before you three bad choices and three

good ones. I could give you a hundred more, but these are enough.

In closing, I ask you, What have you done with Jesus? You may get along fairly well without Him now, but the day is coming when you will need His services at the bar of God's justice.

“Today the Saviour calls: Oh, listen now!
Within these sacred walls to Jesus bow;
Today the Saviour calls; for refuge fly,
The storm of justice falls; and death is nigh.
The spirit calls today; yield to his power,
Oh grieve him not away; 'tis mercy's hour.”

MANY CALLED BUT FEW CHOSEN

matthew 22:14

For many are called, but few are chosen.

The plan of salvation is plain, easy to understand, and is for everybody. This will be seen in such passages as the great commission "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." Also, "And it shall come to pass that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved."

But it is evident that all men and women will not be saved, but only those who repent of sin, and take up their cross and follow Jesus.

1st. Repentance.

The Westminster definition of repentance is,

"Repentance unto life is a saving grace whereby a sinner out of a true sense of sin, and apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ, doth with grief and hatred of his sin, turn from it unto God, with full purpose of and endeavor after new evidence."

Repentance unto life is a change of mind, and a change of mind means a change of attitude. Sam Jones said that repentance unto life is, "not only being sorry for having committed sin, but being sorry enough to have nothing more to do with sin."

There is a vast difference between Godly sorrow

and worldly remorse; worldly remorse very often leads to death, but Godly sorrow leads to forgiveness and eternal life.

Judas and Peter illustrate this thought, Judas was remorseful and took his own life; Peter repented and was forgiven.

The Prodigal son too, changed his mind, and in a short time we see him making rapid progress toward home.

One reason why a good many don't repent is because they don't think.

A young lady said to Dr. Torrey, "Don't talk to me like that. You make me think seriously, and I don't like to think." It is always encouraging to find a young man or woman thinking. Well might the poet say, "In solitude I often come, and find my sweetest joys." Dr. Broughton says that a criminal drew his attention one time to that verse, "The wages of sin is death." "Oh," said he, "I wish I could have understood this a year ago as I do today." The trouble with him lay in the fact that he didn't think about it. Very little is accomplished without thinking. Pope has said, "Character makes the man," the Bible says, "Thinking makes character"—"For as a man thinketh in his heart, so is he."

If we go back into the history of arts and inventions we shall find an Englishman sitting under a tall oak. He spies a spider spinning his web from tree to tree; he goes home and shuts himself up in

his room for days; when he comes forth he astonishes the world with a plan for a suspension bridge. You say he was a genius, he was just a thinker.

Professor Morse gave to the world magnetic telegraphy, a boon of priceless value. Cyrus W. Field swung the lightning under the sea and cabled the continents together. James Y. Simpson discovered the anasthetical properties of chloroform and thereby has destroyed nine-tenths of the horrors of surgery. The reason why Morse and Field and Simpson had success and became a blessing to mankind was because they thought.

And if the sinner is going to be saved and made a blessing to others, he must do as David, who said, "I thought upon my ways and turned my feet unto thy testimonies."

2nd. Taking up the Cross and following Jesus.

"Verily, I say unto you, he that is ashamed to confess Me before men, him will I also be ashamed to confess before My Father." And again, "He that will not take up his cross and follow Me, is not worthy of Me." No man can take up the cross and do the work connected with it, the way it ought to be done, except his heart is right with God.

A Bible was prepared for the "World's Fair," at a cost of one thousand dollars. When the lids were opened it was found to be nothing more than an ordinary Bible. All the extra work was on the outside. It was that which explained its value. It is Chris-

tian activity which makes the Christian valuable to humanity, not simply believing certain things and sitting with folded arms.

Carrying the cross is not very hard to begin with, and it becomes easier as it becomes a habit. The power of habit is a great thing; some men smoke, some drink, some chew tobacco, some curse, some exaggerate, because of habit.

In the biography of General Sheridan, we are told that a battle occurred near a canal where a number of his old worn-out horses were confined; during the heavy firing they grew warlike, and forming into squadrons charged upon a number of mules and killed two, while the others fled. They next charged upon and overthrew a high rail fence, and didn't stop their wild demonstration until the firing ceased. Charging the enemy had become a habit with them, it ought to be so with us.

Christ didn't come to establish peace between heaven and hell, God and Satan, the Christian and the Infidel. The carrying of the cross means at all times to follow Christ. What would He do? then, I will do the same. A young man gave his testimony for Christ, and was told by an old worldly-wise man that he ought to be ashamed. To which he responded, "I am, but God forbid that I should ever be ashamed of Jesus."

Have we repented of sin?

Remember, just one sin kept the young ruler out

of the kingdom and probably ruined his soul. Going half-way won't satisfy divine justice, Judas did that.

Are we bearing the cross? It will mean ridicule, but it is worth while.

“Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a present far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my life, my soul, my all.”

WHAT MANNER OF MAN IS THIS?

Matthew 8:27

What manner of man is this, that even the
winds and the sea obey him?

We are not told in this chapter where Christ was going, but we may be sure that He was on a mission of mercy. He came to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, to restore sight to the blind; and who will say that He didn't pursue His mission with untiring energy? When His Father and Mother sought and found Him in the temple His question was, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?"

I am reminded of a little boy who was playing in front of his home, when a man came up to him and said, "Where is your father?" The boy said, "I don't know, but I guess you'll find him where there are sick and suffering ones." So Christ healed the sick and cleansed the lepers and cast out devils, and was always ready to lay a healing hand on a fevered brow, and all this He did without money and without price.

Winston Churchill, the British Member of Parliament, when cautioned against over-work, said, "The

Churchills don't live long, and I mean to make the most of my life.'" It is not necessary that a person live long in order to do a great work. John the Baptist completed his work in thirty years; Murry McCheyne completed his mission in twenty-nine years; D. L. Moody was not an old man when he heard the voice of God saying: "Come up higher." These men simply did with their might during their short lives what their hands found to do, and as a result the world was blessed and the Bible statement verified: "The righteous shall be held in everlasting remembrance."

Christ's disciples followed Him into the ship, but they had not gone far when a storm arose and threatened their lives. A more terrified bunch of folks never gathered around their leader than the followers of Christ that night. Listen to them as they come to Him with, in substance, the pathetic question:

"Carest thou not that we perish?
How canst thou lie asleep?
When each moment so madly is threat'ning
A grave in the angry deep?"

Immediately their fear is turned to surprise when the storm dropped dead at the sound of His voice; for, looking into the wind, He said: "Peace;" and down to the waves He said: "Be still"—and there was a great calm. The enemies of the church are very much like that big wind: They go howling around and try to frighten all on board the old ship

of Zion, but with Christ on the captain's bridge we are eternally safe.

“When the storms of life are raging
Tempests wild o'er sea and land,
I will seek a place of refuge
In the hollow of God's hand.”

No wonder they said, “What manner of man is this?”

1st. He was a God-called man. “For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world, through Him, might be saved.” “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear ye Him.”

God calls into His service very imperfect material, and uses it for His glory and man's welfare. For instance, Abraham not only lied, but succeeded in getting his wife to stand by him in his lying. Moses was far from being a perfect man, yet God made him a blessing to Israel. David, the sweet singer of the Old Testament, committed one of the blackest crimes in the catalogue of sins. Peter denied his Lord with cursing and swearing before the crucifixion; but when endued with the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost he led three thousand souls into the Kingdom of God.

And, my friends, you and I may be God-called, for it always pleases Him to take the weak things and the foolish things and use them to the confounding of the so-called wise and great. Christ was per-

fect material, however, for He was God and man combined. And believe me, when God and man are combined today, something worth while will be done.

2nd. He was a fearless man.

When, in the synagogue, he read the Scripture relative to Himself; He knew before doing so that they would cast Him out, yet He went and did it; was not that a demonstration of fearlessness? Have you ever thought of the courage He displayed when He made a scourge of cords and drove from the house of God those described as being buyers and sellers?

How much better it would be for the church militant if all those who are honored with leadership in her ranks were noted for fearlessness in propagating righteousness, regardless of the cost. Some one has beautifully said, "He died with His face to the enemy, and not a wound in His back."

"Hath he marks to lead me to Him
If He be my guide?
In His feet and hands are wound-prints,
And His side."

3rd. He was a tender-hearted man.

When dealing with important matters relative to His kingdom, the mothers crowded Him with their children, and the disciples wanted to drive them away; but Christ said, "Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

When on the cross He was reviled by the thieves who were crucified with Him, but when one of them besought Him for mercy, how quickly His tender-heartedness was seen, for He said, "Today shalt thou be with Me in paradise."

Now, this man, Christ Jesus, is still alive and always the same. He willeth not the eternal death of any, but with open arms He invites the whole world to gather around His table and enjoy the gospel feast, which alone can satisfy the hungry soul. Have you received the call from God to go forth and preach His gospel? If so, thank Him for the high honor which is yours. Are you absolutely fearless in drawing the attention of men to their sinful condition and their need of a Saviour? If so, praise the Spirit for giving unto you heavenly grit. Are you tender-hearted in dealing with bruised souls? If so, thank God for that Christ-likeness.

"To the work, to the work;
We are servants of God;
Let us follow the path
That our Master has trod."

THE GREAT COMMISSION

Matthew 28:19

Go ye therefore and make disciples
of all nations.

This was the command of Christ to His early disciples, after His resurrection and before His ascension. It is His command today to all who are seeking to follow in His footsteps.

A disciple is a learner or follower; and in order to be a follower in the truest sense we must know the one whom we would follow. There are at least three ways of knowing a person: First, by personal contact; second, by the testimony of reputable people; third, by reading what the individual has to say.

Now we cannot know Christ by personal contact in the physical sense, but we can and do know Him by the other methods mentioned. We believe that Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Peter and Paul were reputable people; men whose word was beyond dispute, and whose testimony has stood the test of time, and the most severe criticism. And in Christ's Sermon on the Mount and in His message to Nicodemus and others, we get to know a great deal about the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.

Now, if we would win others to the cause of Christ, we must be in touch with Him ourselves. I think I hear Him say in the previous verse, "All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth, go ye therefore." It is the disciple plus the power of Christ that wins in the conflict with the world, and the flesh, and the devil. Lifting Christ up before the world keeps us in close contact with Him, and in that attitude we are always successful. Christ is a magnet of the greatest possible power, "And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto Me." There are some things about a magnet which are interesting to know, and which if spiritualized may become beneficial to the truth-seeker. In the first place a magnet will draw nails to it when it will not move gold or silver. And is it not true that Christ draws the sinner but leaves the self-righteous alone? This is clearly proven in the case of the Pharisee and the Publican who went up to the temple to pray. The scribes and Pharisees were denounced in scathing terms while the thief on the cross had an abundant entrance into Paradise. In the second place, a nail which is drawn by a magnet has a power imparted to it which enables it to draw other nails toward the source of its power. So we find the woman of Samaria going into the village and saying to the people, "Come see a man that told me all things that ever I did, is not this the Christ?" and we are told that the whole village went out to see Jesus and many persons be-

lieved in Him because of the saying of the woman, "He told me all things that ever I did." This is also very clearly illustrated by Philip who went to Nathaniel and said unto him, "We have found him of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of Joseph." Nathaniel said, "Can there any good things come out of Nazareth?" Philip simply said, "Come and see," and Nathaniel began to move toward Jesus who was the source of Philip's power. In the third place a magnet will draw nails or the like out of slime, but it will not draw the slime; and Christ will draw the sinner, but his sins must be dropped.

When the woman taken in adultery was left standing alone in the presence of Jesus, he said, "Who hath condemned you?" She said, "No man, Lord"; then, in tender tones, he said: "Neither do I condemn you," but with firmness in speech he added, "Go, and sin no more."

In the fourth place a nail used by a magnet in drawing other things of like quality should not boast, for the power belongs to the magnet.

Isaiah used to boast a bit and evidently stood quite high in his own estimation, but one day he arrived at the place where he could truthfully say, "In the year when King Ussiah died, I saw the Lord high and lifted up and His train filled the temple. Then said I, Woe is me for I am undone; for I am a man of unclean lips and I dwell in the midst of a people of

unclean lips, for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts."

Job was the kind of a man who, I think, never sought the back seat in the synagogue, or in any place where men met. But one day Job's eyes were opened as never before, and from his lips fell this statement, "I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear, but not mine eyes seeth Thee, wherefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes."

Moses, too, with stately tread, walked over to the rock, saying, "Shall we bring water from the rock?" You see Moses had risen so in the estimation of himself that he robbed God of the honor which was His due. Well might the poet write—

"What could Moses' rod have done,
Had he not been divinely sent,
The power was from the Lord alone,
And Moses but the instrument."

I like the spirit which Paul manifested when he said, "God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ."

And I think John Bowring must have been meditating on that scripture when he wrote the beautiful hymn beginning with—

"In the cross of Christ I glory,
Tow'ring o'er the wrecks of time,
All the light of sacred story,
Gathers 'round its head sublime."

Now the best way to make disciples is by coming in contact with Christ, who is the greatest magnet in the universe, and then using the power which He imparts to us in drawing sinners like ourselves to the source of that power.

May the power imparted to us never be broken by sin, for if that happens our efforts will be useless.

WINNING SOULS

Proverbs 11: 30

He that winneth souls is wise.

If I were to ask you what in your estimation is the most important thing in life, I am of the opinion that I should receive many answers. Some would say, to get rich is the most important thing in life, and to that answer I should have to say: "But we have a story in the twelfth chapter of Luke, of a man who became rich and his riches didn't prove to be of any importance, for God said, 'Thou fool.'"

Others would say to get fame and honor is the most important thing in life. And to that answer I should have to draw attention to Lord Clive of England, the great conqueror of India. He certainly won fame and honor, and the promises of life were green with hope for him. But he was poor in the midst of wealth and wretched despite his fame, for he died a suicide.

Then others would say, culture is the most important thing in life. And to that statement I should have to speak of Lord Byron, for there never was a greater literary success than he, and there never was a life so unsatisfactory, for, dipping his pen in the anguish of a broken heart, he wrote of himself on his last birthday:

“My days are in the yellow leaf,
The flowers and fruits of love are gone;
The worm, the canker, and the grief
Are mine alone.

“The fire that in my bosom plays
Is lone as some volcanic isle;
No torch is kindled at its blaze,
A funeral pile.”

Still others would say the most important thing in life is pleasure. To this statement I should have to say: “The most popular man of mirth that ever lived, so far as we can learn, was Theodore Hook. But one day at a dinner everyone was struck with his ghastly paleness. And, turning around to a mirror, he said of himself: “Ah, I see how it is. I look just as I am—done up in mind, in body and in purse.” When he reached home he went to bed, and a friend calling on him found him there. “Here you see me,” said the great wit, “all my buckling and padding dropped forever, and I a gray-headed old man.” He died a little later in despair.

Now, in my estimation, the most important thing in life is to win souls. How may this be done?

First, by prayer.

The effectual, fervent prayer of a truly righteous man availeth much. But there is a vast difference between praying and saying one's prayers. Some poet has well said:

“I often say my prayers,
But do I ever pray?
And do the wishes of my heart
Go with the words I say?
I might as well kneel down
And worship gods of stone
As offer to the living God
A prayer of words alone,
For words without the heart
The Lord will never hear;
Nor will he to those lips attend
Whose prayers are not sincere.”

An old lady on one occasion saw that passage of scripture, “If your faith is as large as a grain of mustard seed and you pray for this mountain to be removed and cast into the sea, it shall obey you.” She decided to test her faith, and one night when about to go to bed she looked through the window and saw a mountain in the distance. She then dropped on her knees and asked God to remove it during the night. When she awoke the next morning she looked, and there stood the mountain as it did when she prayed. And what do you suppose she said? “I just thought so.” Do we not oftentimes ask God for things, and at the same time deep down in our hearts we feel that he won’t grant them?

Friends, let us rely on God’s promise regarding prayer for the unconverted and the backslider, and we shall win.

Second, by testimony.

I always link prayer and testimony together, for

I believe that they should go hand in hand in the service of soul winning.

It has pleased God, through the foolishness of preaching to save souls, the Bible asserts. And what is preaching but bearing testimony to the saving and helping power of Christ? Luke says, "If thou wilt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." Christ himself said, "He that is ashamed to confess Me before men, him will I also be ashamed to confess before My father and before the holy angels."

A simple word of personal testimony has often done more good than a well prepared sermon. A young man whose acquaintance I made years ago stood at an open air meeting one evening and listened to the testimony of a convert. It produced conviction of sin and led to his conversion, and today he is a successful minister in the Baptist church. A young man in Minnesota when converted decided to raise the family altar that very night. His wife had invited company for supper and requested him to wait until they had gone. When she saw that he was bent upon having family worship while they were all present, she urged him—as it was his first attempt along that line—to have it in the kitchen with the servants. He replied that when Christ had honored him by coming into his heart and home, that instead of taking Him into the kitchen he would give Him the parlor. That night

they had family worship together, guests included, in the parlor. And the young man, who was determined to honor his Lord so in the presence of guests who had apparently no interest in religion, became a mighty soul winner throughout his state.

Oh, friends! the greatest work in the world is soul winning, and the wisest men are engaged in it. Are you?

BLIND MEN

John 9: 25

Whereas I was blind.

This was the testimony of a man who was born blind, but whose sight was restored through Christ. It is also the testimony of all who know Christ by personal experience. Some of the greatest men the world has ever known have been men who discovered before it was too late that they were blind and in order to be successful must receive sight. David prayed, "Open Thou mine eyes so that I may behold wondrous things in Thy law." Luther was blind regarding God's simple plan of salvation. He thought that salvation was to be secured by works, but when in the act of doing penance the Holy Spirit opened his eyes and he saw that salvation is of grace. "For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves it is the gift of God."

An eminent scientist was asked on one occasion what was the greatest discovery that he had ever made, and he responded: "The greatest discovery I ever made was that I was blind and needed sight."

I wish to speak of some things to which we are, as a rule, blind, and hope that if necessary our eyes may be opened. We are blind as a rule.

First. To our own ignorance. How often do we hear people talking about where they completed their education. I always pity such, for it only shows their ignorance; there is no such thing as completing one's education. We are always learning, and sad, indeed, is the case of the man who cannot learn something from the most ignorant. I stopped at the street corner a few nights ago to listen to a few illiterate colored folks trying to preach; and, although every law of grammar was snapped in their effort, I got a thought from one, that has been a blessing to me.

I haven't much time for the average place of amusement, and for a good many years I shunned organizations gotten up for the sole purpose of amusing people and taking their hard-earned money. But one day I went to one, and as I sat there looking at my attractive surroundings I thought of the dilapidated condition of many churches, and I said: "It is a downright shame that we who profess to love God permit the world to get ahead of us in cleanliness and attractiveness." I came away from that place with a determination to be the sworn foe of dilapidated places in which people are supposed to assemble to meet God. So I consider that I got a blessing in that place, the amusement of which I was opposed to.

The business man takes a trip, and when he returns he sees many things that ought to be done, changes

in fixtures and in help. Woe to the man or woman who think they know it all.

Second. To our opportunity. We are often blind to the opportunities for doing good which lie all around us. We are nearly all short-sighted, and it always has been so. Paul could only say, "As soon as I shall see how it shall go with me." The man who owned the ground which holds the Mount Morgan mines sold it for five dollars an acre and thought he was getting a good price, inasmuch as he had gotten it for nothing but just taking care of it. Since that time millions of dollars in dividends have been paid by the company which bought it. Morgan could not see his opportunity; if he had, he might have become a wealthy man.

How may we see our opportunity? By using the eyes which have been opened. The strongest men physically are those who exercise their bodies most. The strongest men spiritually are those who exercise their God-given power. Those who discover mines in God's word are those who use their eyes in looking for them. A man with weak eyes told me that after he began to play baseball his sight improved very much. He had to use his eyes and in so doing they became strong.

Some people think that opportunities never come their way; such is a delusion of the devil. Opportunities cross the pathway of every man every day.

Third. To our possibilities. As individuals and as

a church our possibilities are great. "And it doth not yet appear what we shall be." When Christ was living in Nazareth the people never thought, I am sure, that He would be heard of around the world. They never thought that that hand made hard from the use of the saw should wave the scepter of authority, and that upon that brow from which they had so often seen Him wipe the sweat of toil there should rest a crown of unparalleled splendor and universal dominion. Who among the fishermen of Galilee ever thought that Peter would become the famous preacher that he was?

In passing stone quarries we are often led to wonder what use can ever be made of that rock, but a little later we pass a beautiful church building and admire its beauty and learn that that building was made from the ugly pieces of rock we saw a short time before. So it is with man; we conclude that some will never amount to much, and later we get the surprise of our lives by learning that they have accomplished something of great importance to mankind.

James Y. Simpson, Professor Morse, Cyrus W. Field and Thomas Edison at one time were little babes, but they grew to be men of renown and of great worth in the march of civilization.

The language of my text is in the past tense. May God enable us to say truthfully, "Now I can see."

THE NEW MAN

Eph. 4: 24

And that ye put on the new man, which after God
is created in righteousness and true holiness.

In this age we hear a good deal about the new woman, as to how she has risen and asserted her rights, what she has done already for the benefit of the race, and what she hopes to do in the future. It is my purpose in this little sermon to speak of the new man, what he has done and what we have every reason to believe he will do in the future. In doing so it will be necessary to draw your attention to some things which distinguish the new man in Christ Jesus from the old man in sin.

First. Holiness of life.

The Bible asserts that without holiness shall no man see the Lord. Dr. Guthrie in a very eloquent and forceful manner says: "Let no man say that he cannot live a holy life, for sin never wove on hottest hell-fire and the devil never forged a chain so strong that the spirit of God wielding the hammer of his word cannot strike from fettered limbs."

Environment, as some people suppose, has not much to do with retarding a person's growth in grace, and in the knowledge of the truth as it is in

Jesus. Dr. McLeod tells us that "Climate and soil do not account for everything." The palm tree grows on the edge of the desert with leaf clean and green. The Edelweiss, with its dense clusters, flowers on the summit of the Alps. The Traveller's Joy blooms on the highest peak of Teneriffe. The Samphire grows in the cleft of the rock far above the reach of the sea. In Wyoming the hot spring flows hard by the snow-drift.

Sodom had its Lot; Egypt had its Joseph; Babylon had its Daniel, and in the antediluvian chapter of the early twilight bracketed with men, whose biography alone is that they lived and died, is found a man who walked with God. Enoch lived three hundred and sixty-five years, and yet his is the briefest biography ever written. Forester's Life of Dickens covers three volumes. Washington Irving's life by his nephew covers four volumes. Mason takes six folios to complete the tragedy of Milton's career. Lord Macaulay fills eight duodecimos on sixteen years of England's history, but here a single line is all: "Enoch walked with God."

Walking with God is holiness of life, and what Enoch did in his day by the grace of God, we can do in our day.

Second. Fearlessness in testimony is a distinguishing mark of the new man.

The great commission of the early disciples, found in Matthew 28:19, is the commission of regenerate

men in all ages. In doing this work, let us never forget the comforting words of Jesus: "Fear not them that kill the body and after that can do no more, but rather fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."

On the first day of April in the city of Baltimore a good many years ago a farmer went to one of the banks and drew five hundred dollars. On his way to the station he lost his pocketbook. Retracing his steps, he soon came upon a crowd standing on the sidewalk. His pocketbook was the center of attraction, but no one dared to lift it lest he be accused of being an "April-fool." The farmer pushed his way through the crowd and lifted his book and began counting the twenty-dollar bills. Their shouting soon came to an end, when they saw all those "green-backs," and how foolish they must have felt. Are we not often kept from bearing testimony to the saving and keeping power of Jesus by just such a small thing as "what the people would say?"

Third. Earnestness of purpose is also a distinguishing mark of the new man. I have often thought if we could find out the first public testimony of great missionaries, and also the closing remarks of their fruitful careers, that it would certainly make interesting reading. Take Paul, for instance, who began his ministry with "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ," and who closed it with "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept

the faith; henceforth, there is laid up for me a crown of life which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall place upon my head." It is almost impossible for me to think of Paul in action without the poetic lines coming to my mind:

"Preach as if you ne'er might preach again,
And as a dying man to dying men."

Captain Cook never went to school until he was fourteen years old, but he became an educated man and one of the best and greatest navigators that ever spread his sails to the breeze and crossed the stormy sea.

Why did Paul win so many battles in the arena of Christian conflict? It was because of his tremendous earnestness. He talked with the Lord one day on the road to Damascus, and that was enough. Why did Cook master the difficulties that stood between him and such accomplishments? It was because he meant to be somebody, and he kept moving in the right direction.

Do we possess those marks?

First: Holiness of life?

Second: Fearlessness in testimony?

Third: Earnestness of purpose?

If not, why not?

SAVING OTHERS

Matthew 27: 42

He Saved Others.

If a prince in passing by an execution were to take the chains of the malefactor and suffer in his place that deed would be recorded in every newspaper of note in the country, and well deserved would be all the words of praise and sonnets of admiration that would record and eulogize it. Jesus Christ has done that and far more for sinful man, and yet it meets with small approval, is heralded only by the few and, by the majority is looked upon as being an idle tale, a pious legend, a venerable fable, an unpractical myth.

The Scribes and the Pharisees have always been the enemy of Jesus. From that day in the synagogue at Nazareth when He read "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me," until the day on Calvary when He said, "It is finished," they continuously sought to trap Him.

When the disciples had forsaken Him, they were found close to the cross, shouting, "He saved others, Himself He cannot save." They sought to injure His cause by sarcastic remarks, but instead their statement has been a great blessing to countless thou-

sands. For men and women everywhere under conviction of sin, reading this testimony, have been led to believe that if He saved others He could save them, and they have given Him a trial and can truthfully say—

“On Christ the solid rock, I stand,
All other ground is sinking sand.”

First. He saved others from disease.

We are told that a leper came to Him and said, “Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean,” and the Greatest Physician the world ever saw put forth His hand and said, “I will, be thou clean.” That was all that was necessary—no prescription to pay for, and no disagreeable medicine to drink. “And immediately his leprosy left him.” On another occasion a woman who was afflicted with an awful malady, and who had spent all that she had on physicians, without the desired result, came behind Him and touched the hem of His garment, for she had faith to believe that if she even touched His garment that her disease would be healed. Here we find faith in action, she believed, and she touched, and Christ made her whole.

Now sin is the disease of the soul, and it is incurable so far as man’s power goes, but Christ who sent the leper home rejoicing and gave new life to the woman, can, in the twinkle of an eye, cure the disease of the soul. And there are thousands in the

world today and millions in glory who would gladly bear testimony to the truthfulness of that statement.

Second. He saved others from death.

Death is the most ancient and inveterate enemy of man. When our first parents sinned, he entered the world and ever since has reigned with unrelenting severity. Nothing can satisfy his appetite or change his will, for he devours thousands for his daily meal. He listens to no proposals, nor will he accept of enticing terms in compromise, but cuts down all without distinction. The most impoverished and the most affluent, the greatest enemies and the most attached friends have had to say—

“Nay, but I yield, I yield,
I can hold out no more,
I sink beneath thine awful stroke,
And own thee conqueror.”

One day outside the city of Jerusalem Christ met a young man who was being carried to the cemetery, and touching the bier on which he lay, He said, “Young man, I say unto thee, arise,” and the sacred writer says that he who was dead sat up and began to speak. Then we find Him by the graveside of Lazarus whom he loved. Lazarus has been dead four days, but that does not matter, for the one who afterwards robbed death of its sting is by his side and something is going to happen. The tears trickle down the clean face of Jesus, and, stooping, He cried

with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth," and Lazarus obeyed. What He did for these men in the physical sense, He can do for the individual or the church in the spiritual sense.

At one time Frederick Douglas was addressing a large crowd of colored people and his address was far from being an encouragement. He said, "The White Man is against us, the spirit of the age is against us, I see no hope for the Colored Race." A cloud as black as the color of his audience seemed to be settling over them, when an old colored woman stood up and said, "Frederick, God is still alive." So, I wish to say that Christ who saved from the power of death, is still alive.

Third. He saved others from a useless life to a life productive of good works.

Passing by the receipt of custom he said to Matthew, "Follow Me," and we are told that he arose and followed him. One day when passing the Sea of Galilee, he saw Peter casting his net, for he was a fisherman; and he said unto him, "Follow Me and I will make you a fisher of men." Peter followed Him, and Christ was as good as His word.

The same commanding voice that Matthew and Peter heard so long ago is being heard by men and women every day.

Not long ago a man by the name of Roberts, a graduate of Oxford, who mumbled Latin phrases when drunk, got converted at the Bowery Mission in New

York City. Through drink he had become an awful character, but it was just as easy for Christ to regenerate him as the most moral man in the world. Today he is the honored editor of a religious newspaper. Are you living a useless or a useful life? If useful, thank God for the power He has given you, but if useless, make Christ king of your life and it will be crowned with success.

WHAT SHALL I DO TO INHERIT ETERNAL LIFE?

Luke 10: 25

What shall I do to inherit eternal life?

This is one of the most important questions that ever fell from the lips of man. No matter how long we live, when death draws near he is not a welcome visitor. A short time ago a man said to me, "Isn't it too bad that when we are just getting acquainted with this beautiful world that we must die and leave it?" It is remarkable how far man will go and what he will do in order to have good health and length of days. Every day hundreds of people are on their way to Hot Springs, Ark., or to Colorado Springs, or some other famous health resorts in this and other countries, seeking recuperation, and it is pitiable to see many of them come back to die when medical aid has failed.

"And must this body die;
This mortal frame decay,
And must these active limbs of mine,
Lie mouldering in the clay?"

Methuselah lived to be 969 years old, but he died. Adam lived to be 930 years old, but he also died. Enos lived to be 905 years old, but he too had to go the way of all flesh. This body will decay, but within its walls there is a soul which may live forever, and

its existence in happiness depends upon what we do with Christ. The lawyer didn't say, what shall I do to inherit riches, or what shall I do to enjoy this present life, but, "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?" If this is your question, my answer is—

First. You must be born again.

I cannot explain the new birth, but I know that it must and can be accomplished. Years ago men said that an ocean steamer could never be built capable of carrying hundreds of passengers from Liverpool to New York, but just when they were satisfied that their judgment was correct, the ocean steamer was constructed and now we have only to visit New York to see giant liners arrive with thousands of passengers brought safely across the Atlantic.

Not a great many years ago men contended that water couldn't be made to rise higher than its source, but today water is sent hundreds of feet higher than its source. And while we cannot understand how confessing sin and believing on Jesus can make a new creature, yet, it is possible. Despite the fact that we have sinned and come short of the Glory of God, yet, praise His name, we may become new creatures and mount up to more than our original felicity.

Augustine of Northern Africa, well educated and having a praying mother, became one of the worst young men that ever breathed his native air. But one day the spirit of God spoke to him and he listened to the advise, was convicted of sin and converted

to a life of righteousness; and Augustine became one of the best saints that ever lived, and one of the greatest preachers that ever proclaimed the gospel of Christ. You see he became a new creature.

We are told that it was impossible for any one to sink lower than John Newton, who not only delighted in sinning himself, but sought to ruin every young man he came in contact with. But Newton became a new man through the grace of God, and he who sank so low in vice, rose so high in holiness of life that the average Christian of today would require a spiritual telescope in order to see him. His beautiful hymns have been sung around the world, and there are many souls in heaven who were brought out of the mire of sin and started on the road to purity through his messages as a preacher.

What God did for Augustine and Newton He has done and will do for all who come unto Him through Christ the Door.

Second. Your faith must be productive of good works.

It is hardly necessary for me to make that statement, for the works of a regenerate man will be good and numerous, unless he becomes a spiritual invalid.

A tree is known by the fruit it bears, and a Christian is known by his life, not by his profession.

In doing good, let us not despise what may seem to be insignificant opportunities. It is ours to plant and to water, it is God's to give the increase.

Dr. Lyman Beecher, on one occasion, preached to the magnificent congregation of one man. Doubtless he thought that nothing would ever come of that service in so far as far-reaching results were concerned. But twenty years later a stranger went to him at the close of a service and asked him if he remembered that large congregation that he addressed so many years before. Beecher remembered the occasion and was agreeably surprised when the man said, "I was your congregation, and your words that night started me on the road to heaven. I am now and have been for years a minister of the gospel." Christ when on earth gave up almost a whole afternoon to showing the way of life or explaining the New Birth to a woman, but His effort was not in vain, for through her a whole Samaritan village was led into the kingdom of God.

After William Carey had labored as a missionary in India for many years, with seemingly no results, one day he baptized Chrisna Pall, and through that one man brought from Heathenism to Christianity a whole tribe, for Chrisna Pall was their leader, and they followed his example. May we not despise the day of small things, nor lament too much lost opportunities.

"They do me wrong who say I come no more,
When once I knock and fail to find you in;
For every day I stand outside the door,
And bid you wake and rise to fight and win."

HE BROUGHT HIM TO JESUS

John 1:42

And he brought him to Jesus.

Napoleon said on one occasion, "I know men, but Christ was no mere man." Ingersoll said, "If Christ were here today, I would be His friend." The officers who were sent to arrest Jesus by the Pharisees came back without Him, and their excuse for doing so was "Never man spake like this man." Pilate, the Roman Governor, who questioned Christ regarding the accusations which the Jews had made concerning Him, said, "I find no fault in Him." The centurion and they who were with him watching Jesus die, said, "Truly this man was the son of God." Now, this was the one in whom Andrew became interested when John the Baptist said, "Behold the lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." And this is the one to whom he brought his own brother Simon.

The interest which Andrew showed in Christ is the kind exemplified by every true disciple today, and the attitude of Andrew toward his brother should be the attitude of every believer in God's simple plan of redemption.

There are at least two methods by which we can

bring our brothers and sisters to Christ, our only Saviour:

First. By testimony. "If thou wilt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." Andrew talked to Simon in such an enthusiastic manner as to compel him to come and see the Christ. Philip found Nathaniel and said unto him, "We have found Him of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write Jesus of Nazareth the son of Joseph"; and so convincing was his testimony that Nathaniel rose and followed him to Jesus.

Testimony for Christ ought to become a business with the believer, for, after all, the greatest work in which one can be engaged is the work of bringing others to Christ. When the leper was cleansed I am sure that he never grew tired in his praise of the one who healed him, and when the sinner realizes that he has been saved from sin and its awful consequences, speaking of such a blessing is always a pleasure for him.

When the woman of Samaria concluded that the one who talked with her at the well was the Messiah, she went into the city and said, "Come see a man who told me all things that ever I did; is not this the Christ?" And of those who went to see Him we are told that many believed on Him because of the saying of the woman, he "told me all things that ever I did."

After making the statement, "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved," Paul asks the question, "How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?" And Christ said to His disciples, "Go ye into all the world and preach." Do we not hear Him say to us, "Go ye into all the world and bear testimony to My saving and comforting power?"

Some one has imagined Jesus talking with an angel after He went back to heaven, and in the course of their conversation the angel asked Him what plan He had devised for the purpose of carrying the news of salvation to the uttermost parts of the earth. Christ said, "I called around Me twelve disciples and taught them and then sent them forth to teach others." "But," said the angel, "what if that plan should fail?" "If that plan fails," said Christ, "I have no other." But friends, that plan will not fail, for the disciples bore testimony, and those who heard them and believed, bore testimony; and so on down the centuries. May we follow their grand example, and

"Salvation's story repeat o'er and o'er,
Till none can say of the children of men:
Nobody ever told me before."

Second. By life. The command of Christ to His disciples when on earth is His command to every

believer in this enlightened twentieth century, "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven." Awhile ago when I addressed a meeting in a tabernacle in Chicago we had a testimony meeting. One after another told how the Lord had saved and kept them from the power of sin. I shall never forget how one old man finished his remarks by saying: "If you don't believe what I say regarding the change that Christ can make in one's life, ask my wife—she lives with me." Of course everybody smiled, and his wife arose and corroborated his story. Folks may talk just as much as they wish to regarding the blessings they have received from the Gospel, but if those who live with them don't see a change in their life they would do more good to keep quiet. While on the other hand a stirring testimony, backed up by a clean, honest, God-fearing life, is a tremendous power for good. While pastor of a church in Missouri some years ago, a lady who was going to unite with that church on a certain Sunday asked me to urge her husband to come into fellowship on the same day. I did so, but he said, "No, I won't come on that day, but if I see any change for good in my wife's life I will come the next time you receive new members." He never joined while I was pastor of that church. She may have been to blame, and she may not have been to blame. I don't know, but I do know this: that a good example is a mighty

power for good. May the desire expressed in the little hymn composed by Washington Gladden be ours:

O Master, let me walk with Thee
In lowly paths of service free;
Tell me Thy secret, help me hear
The strain of toil, the fret of care.

Help me the slow of heart to move
By some clear, winning word of love;
Teach me the wayward feet to stay
And guide them in the homeward way.

Teach me Thy patience; still with Thee
In closer, dearer company,
In work that keeps faith sweet and strong,
In love that triumphs over wrong.

In hope that sends a shining ray
Far down the future's broadening way,
In peace that only Thou canst give;
With thee, O Master, let me live.

Do you want to bring your brothers and sisters to Christ? Then tell them what a dear Saviour He is; and may your life resemble His in being filled with good works.

TEMPERANCE, PATIENCE, GODLINESS

2nd Peter 1:6

Add to knowledge temperance,
And to temperance patience,
And to patience godliness.

The advice of Peter to the early church is the word of God to us today. If we are to accomplish the work which under God we are capable of doing in this community, then we must be temperate, patient and godly.

I wish for a little while to speak on those three Christian virtues.

First: Temperance.

Webster says that temperance in the first place is moderation, and, in the second place, abstinence from intoxicating liquor. There are some real good people everywhere who have more zeal than knowledge. Such people often do a great deal of harm, if put into a position where their influence is likely to be much felt.

Paul had an experience with a certain class whom he characterized as having an abundance of zeal, but devoid of knowledge. I am of the opinion that he had this particular class in mind when he advised Timothy to study to show himself approved unto God.

A great effort is put forth today to exterminate the saloon; some folks may say that too much zeal is being exerted, but I don't think so, for that zeal is backed with the knowledge that the saloon has been and still is the foe of the church, the ruin of the home, and the destruction of the nation.

An old farmer who had in silence listened to a lawyer's clever exposition of prohibitory law, shut his jackknife with a snap, and said: "I may not understand everything you lawyers say, but I have got seven good reasons for voting for prohibition." "What are your seven reasons?" asked the lawyer. The wise old farmer responded, "Four sons and three daughters."

One of the best movements along temperance lines today, I think, is the "Catch-My-Pal" move started in 1909 in Ireland by the Rev. Robert Patterson. He began with a lamp-post group of six men, pledging them to total abstinence and having them promise to get others to do the same thing. The six became thirty-one in three weeks, and over six hundred in five weeks, and in one year a hundred and forty thousand men were engaged in pledging others, and in planning counter attractions against the saloon.

Jack London has published an interesting book, the title of which is "John Barleycorn." It is a pathetic story of personal experience and a strong plea for total abstinence. It is an advice to fathers and mothers to prevent their children forming a taste for

liquor in any form. He himself was only a boy of five when his taste for liquor began, and he calls himself at sixteen a seasoned drinker.

There is no use of a father, before going to his work, praying for the safety of his children if he goes away without putting the lid on the cistern. And there is no use in us praying for prohibition if, when election day comes, we fail to go to the ballot box and do our duty.

Second: Patience.

Patience is the power of waiting for expected results with a calm and restful spirit. Patience is necessary to the accomplishment of anything worth while.

Paul realized that it is necessary in Christian work when he said, "And let us run with patience the race that is set before us."

One of the most remarkable achievements of patience on record is connected with Noah Webster. He spent thirty-six years in the dry study of words and their meaning. But how grand this sturdy old virtue appears when his dictionary is completed. Coming close behind Webster is George Bancroft, who spent twenty-six years in writing the history of America. But at the end of that time his work was applauded and he was pronounced the greatest historian of his time.

The most distinguished violinist that ever came from Europe was staying in a hotel at Boston. The

people who occupied the room next to him were disturbed with his much practice. One of them said to him, "I should think that the most distinguished violinist in the world could get along with less practice." The artist replied, "I hold my audience spell-bound because I practice so much. Six hours of close practice a day enables me to charm my listeners."

May God bless all of us with patience.

Third: Godliness.

We often underestimate the power of a good example, and yet there are many men at the head of affairs in both the temporal and spiritual world, who were encouraged to try for those places because of a good example. I think that Peter had this in mind when he used the words of my text to the early church.

Profession without possession is harmful in any sense, but profession and possession, in so far as Christ is concerned, go hand in hand along the road to success.

Robert E. Lee realized the importance of a good example when he decided not to call at a saloon one morning, because he saw his little boy coming after him.

Successful businessmen are aware that the appearance of their employees has to do with the success of their business. A merchant said to an applicant for a position, "You look seedy, and no business man wants seedy-looking people about him; they don't make a good advertisement for his house."

A prominent merchant in New York, in the course of an address on how to attain success, said: "Clothes don't make the man, but good clothes have gotten many a man a good job. If you have twenty-five dollars and want a job, it is better to spend twenty dollars for a suit of clothes, four dollars for shoes, the rest for a shave, a hair-cut and a clean collar, and walk to the place, than to go with the money in the pockets of a dingy suit.

Godliness ought to be the life of every professing Christian, and the world looks for it, and if it does not appear, then our profession is no good. In other words, Godliness is the Christian's new suit; let us keep it clean and attractive.

"Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven."

FORGETTING THE PAST AND EMBRACING THE FUTURE

Philippians 3:13

Forgetting those things which are behind,
And reaching forth unto those things which are before.

There were some things in the life of Paul which he wanted to forget, and among them, I presume, was his attitude while Stephen was being stoned to death for preaching Christ, and Him crucified.

Another thing he wanted to forget, I suppose, was his mission to Damascus, when he met Christ.

I feel sure that Paul blushed as he thought of those two experiences, but how often do we hear folks in testimony meetings talk of their dirty past in a manner which creates the impression that they are proud of such. Now, when God forgives our past, He forgets it, and that ought to be our aim, too.

I wish to draw attention at this time to two things we as Christians ought to forget, and also to two things we should strive for.

First: We should forget all about our past failures. If we brood over past failures, it will have a tendency to weaken our chance of success in the future. This is true in almost every sphere in which we move, and hundreds of illustrations could be easily gotten prov-

ing the truth of that statement. When Sir Thomas Lipton began in business for himself, he failed. A few years later he started again and failed; but instead of brooding over his failures, he became more determined to win, and long ago he was knighted by Queen Victoria because of his success.

A Scotch detective told me that half the police force in one of their large cities was made up of young doctors and lawyers who had failed in their final exams, and who did not care to make another attempt.

When John B. Gough began to live the Christian life, he failed, but he was not defeated, for very soon, through his efforts saloons were thinned, drunkards were not so numerous, and he was spoken of to the uttermost parts of the earth as the greatest temperance exponent in the world. If we have failed, let us not be like the young professional man, not have the courage to try again, but in the name of our risen Christ may we prove that we possess the quality that made Lipton the successful business man and Gough the mighty temperance advocate.

Second: We should forget worldly applause. It is fickle at its best and dries up like the morning dew. The world that shouts its approval of you today may damn you tomorrow.

When in St. Louis some years ago I was acquainted with the champion batter of the American League of that year, and I used to go once in a while to see him

in action. He was the idol of the club. If he made a good hit he was applauded, but if he made a small blunder, he was unmercifully denounced. As I sat there and listened, I said to myself, worldly applause after all is not long-lived and is worth very little.

When Daniel Webster made his famous speech, in a few hours he was pronounced the greatest orator on the American platform, but a few years later he was denounced as an office-seeker, and the broken heart of the great man was laid in the grave at Marshfield, because of unkind criticism.

May we pay no attention to worldly applause, but have in mind the Master's words, "Woe unto you if the world loves you." Now, we, as Christians, in the first place should strive for power; in fact, without this we can be of little use in the service of Christ or any other kind.

The disciples were to wait in Jerusalem until endowed with power. They did so, and when it came they accomplished much. Dr. Gordon suggests that a good question to put to applicants for church membership is this one, "Do you wish to be a member with or without power? If they say without power, tell them you have too many of that kind and you don't need any more."

Doing our work well today will arm us with power for future emergencies.

Aaron Burr had a perplexing case to handle one time, so complicated was it that he sought the assist-

ance of Daniel Webster. No sooner did he state the case than Webster showed him how to handle it in order to win. Burr was greatly surprised at Webster's ability to handle such a difficult matter with such apparent ease. But the real secret of Webster's ability on that case lay in the fact, that a short time before he had studied out that very problem; so I say, if we pay attention to today we shall be ready for the problems of life as they rise tomorrow. May our prayer be—

“Send the power, send the power,
Send the power just now,
Just now send the power,
Send the power just now.”

In the second place we should strive for the commendation of Christ. The military man is proud when commended by the commander-in-chief. Christ is our Commander-in-Chief and his word of praise will be glory for me.

A man said to me on one occasion: “Mr. Boyd, which would you prefer to enjoy, life as you go along, or to save every penny and deny yourself the comforts of life, so that you might be properly cared for in old age?” I said, “I don't want to be extravagant now, but I am not going to forego the comforts of life now, that I might be cared for in old age.” But the beauty of the Christian life lies in the fact that we have the promise of the life that now is and in the world to come life everlasting.

I read a while ago of two men who rose early and climbed a high mountain, to see the sun rise. As it rose, one took off his hat, and facing the east said, "Glories of the past, I salute you." The other took off his hat and facing the west said, "Glories of the future, I salute you." The latter had the mind of Paul; may we, as Christians, come into possession of the same.

PETER AND JOHN AT THE TEMPLE

Acts 3:1

Peter and John went up together into the temple
at the hour of prayer.

At the beginning of this little sermon I think that it would be well for us to get as close to Peter and John as possible, and look them over carefully.

In looking at Peter we are led to think of his call from being a fisherman to be an Apostle, of his fall from close fellowship with Jesus to that of denying him with oaths, of his repentance, which is seen in the bitter tears which he shed when Christ looked at him. I think that Peter could well have said:

“He looked on me, O look of love,
My heart by it was broken,
And with that look of love He gave
The Holy Spirit’s token.”

And when the Day of Pentecost arrived we see the power of Peter in preaching the greatest sermon as a soul winner that has ever been delivered. Having looked at Peter fairly closely, let us now turn to John, and we find that he too was called from the humble occupation of fisherman to be a catcher of men. John was not so bold as Peter, but he was very ambitious as will be seen in his desire to have a high

place in Christ's kingdom. The faithfulness of John is quite noticeable, for when the other disciples had forsaken Christ John was found at the foot of the cross.

Christ looked at Peter when he denied him, but what a contrast there must have been between that look and the one he gave John when looking down from the cross he saw that lone disciple, and said: "Son, behold thy mother."

Now in the text we are told that these two great men were on their way to the temple at the hour of prayer. It was just following Pentecost and what a glorious time they must have had talking about heavenly things.

First. These men went to the temple to pray. Some beautiful verse has been written on this healthful Christian exercise. For instance—

"Prayer highest soars when she most prostrate lies,
And when she supplicates she storms the skies;
Thus, the way to heaven is an easy task,
For what can be more easy than to ask;
Yet, oft with sad experience we find,
That clogged with earth, some prayers are left behind,
And some blow off with every wind;
To kneel is easy, to pronounce not hard,
Then why are some debarred?

Hear what an ancient oracle has said:

"Some sing their prayers,
And some their prayers do say,
But he an Elias is,
Who knows how his prayers to pray."

The disciples had been taught to pray at their own request. You remember how they came to Jesus and said: "Lord, teach us to pray as John also taught his disciples." Their prayers were to be short and to the point, "use not vain repetitions," etc., and they were told that the most effective prayer is the one which is offered in one's own room. "But thou, when thou prayest enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut the door, pray to thy father which is in secret, and thy father who sees in secret shall reward thee openly."

Two men went up to the temple to pray, one was a Pharisee, the other a Publican. The Pharisee prayed with himself but the Publican prayed to God, and what a difference we see in them as they leave the temple. I fear that many persons who pray resemble the Pharisee more than the Publican, in attitude towards God and in results.

"I often say my prayers, but do I ever pray?
And do the wishes of my heart go with the words I say?
I might as well kneel down and worship gods of stone,
As offer to the Living God a prayer of words alone;
For words without the heart, the Lord will never hear,
Nor will he to those lips attend, whose prayers are not
sincere."

Second. They went to pray because they believed in prayer.

They did not go to prayer meeting simply because of custom, but because of the promise, "Where two

or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst to bless."

God hears and answers prayer; they knew that, and that was why they prayed. They had put God to the test and were satisfied. Paul and Silas prayed and sang praises in the dungeon at Philippi, and what a marvelous work was done in that unlikely place. When Peter was in prison the disciples continued in prayer for his release, and before their prayers were ended Peter was liberated. Hezekiah prayed for length of life, and the Lord added to his days fifteen years. And

"Were half the breath that's vainly spent,
To heaven in supplication sent,
Our grateful songs would oftener be,
Hear what the Lord has done for me."

Third. They performed a miracle.

I have often noticed that men and women who pray, believing in prayer, are often enabled to do things that are worth while. The praying man is always a working man. "Faith without works is dead."

These men found an opportunity for service at the door of the very temple in which they worshipped. I fear that oftentimes we look too far away for opportunities for Christian work. Let us remember that here in enlightened America—

"We don't have to cross the ocean,
And the heathen lands explore;
We can find the heathen nearer,
We can find them at the door."

Just look at the miracle. A crippled man was sitting at the gate asking for help. Peter said "Silver and gold have I none, but such as I have give I unto thee. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk, and he, leaping up, stood and walked and entered with them into the temple, walking and leaping and praising God."

He was thankful for the great blessing God had bestowed upon him and he paid no attention to dignity.

May we never forget to go to the house of God to pray, believing in prayer, and I feel certain that around the door we shall find some one who needs our help.

DAVID'S CONFESSION

Ps. 119: 59

I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto thy testimonies.

Testimony has been one method used by the Holy Spirit in saving men and women from wicked and shameful lives, and the wages that such bring. Often when an arousing sermon fails to convict of sin and lead to Christ, a simple testimony has done the work. In the Acts of the Apostles we read, "If thou wilt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved."

I have in mind a young Baptist minister in the East on whom many a fine sermon had no effect, but the simple testimony of an illiterate man was the means of his conversion.

Moses said, "We are journeying to the place of which the Lord said, I will give it you; come thou with us, and we will do thee good." David said, "The Lord hath done great things for us whereof we are glad." And again, "This poor man cried and the Lord heard him and saved him out of all his troubles." He also adds, "I waited for the Lord and he inclined unto me and heard my cry." Now he

says, "I thought upon my ways and turned my feet into thy testimonies."

The text speaks to us about three very important things: Man wandering; man thinking; man coming back to God.

First. Man wandering.

When man disobeyed God he was driven from the fair bowers of Eden out among the thorns and nettles of a sin-cursed world; and there he wandered. When Jacob robbed his brother and deceived his father, he became a wanderer on the face of the earth, with a conscience ill at ease, and remained in that condition for twenty years. When the prodigal son got dissatisfied with his father's house, he gathered his possessions together and started on a long journey to a far-off land. There he wandered and squandered until he became a pitiable sight, ragged and hungry and deserted, on whose brow might well have been stamped, "Thou fool."

The natural man has not improved along this line; he is still wandering. When he stepped out of Eden, his back was toward God, and that is his attitude today. That is the reason we are always confronted with ruined homes and blasted lives and well filled jails and penitentiaries—man is wandering away from God.

Second. Man thinking.

A few weeks ago I talked with a young man about becoming a Christian; and was very much surprised

when he said, "Please don't bother me with such subjects." He cared more for the fleeting things of time than he did for the stable things of eternity. I am glad that all men do not resemble him in this respect, for some of the greatest thinkers the world has known devoted their renowned powers to the propagation of the solution of every problem with which the world is beset—the Gospel of Christ.

Aroused man is the greatest thinker that the world has today, and when he thinks seriously something happens. Years ago, when limbs were being amputated suffering was intense, but James Y. Simpson began to think and very soon gave to the world the anasthetical properties of chloroform. Not so very far back in the years the countries could not communicate with each other except by letter or messenger; but Cyrus W. Field began to think, and the Atlantic cable was laid. Not a great while ago travel was very slow and tedious, but George Stevenson began to think, and now we have trains running a mile a minute, carrying hundreds of passengers. When a sail vessel was the best on which a person could cross the ocean, six weeks were spent in covering the distance between Liverpool and Philadelphia, but Robert Fulton began to think, and now we can cross the Atlantic in six days in floating palaces. When man begins to think, he is going to do something, whether it be good or bad. Judas thought, and he betrayed Christ for thirty pieces of silver. Liv-

ington thought, and as a result Africans heard the gospel.

Third. Man coming back home. Homesickness is an awful experience. The German proverb says, "If homesick, go home." Some year ago when the English army was fighting, a Scotch regiment went to help them. But the Scotchmen began to die in great numbers, and the doctors didn't know what was the cause. At last the reason was discovered. The Scotch pipers were playing the tune which reminded them of the heather-clad hills and the men were being killed by homesickness.

Is there a homesick wanderer out in the land of sin today? Then God invites you back home by way of the cross, and if you come there will be joy in heaven and in your own heart.

Burns was right when he said:

"When ranting round in pleasure's ring,
Religion may be blinded;
Or if she gie a random sting,
It may be little minded;
But when on life we're tempest driven,
A conscience but a canker,
A correspondence fixed with heaven
Is sure a noble anchor."

It is true that Jacob wandered, but it is equally true that he returned and made restitution as far as possible and became an honored Israelite. It is also true that the prodigal wandered far and squandered all his possessions, but there came a time in

his life when he said, "I will arise and go to my Father," and he went, and the Father freely forgave him.

"Return, O wanderer, to thy home,
'Tis madness to delay;
There is no pardon in the tomb,
And brief is mercy's day."

FAITH, VIRTUE, KNOWLEDGE

2nd Peter 1: 5

Add to your faith, virtue,
And to your virtue, knowledge.

Faith in God, belief in virtue, and a striving after substantial knowledge, ought to characterize and does characterize every Christian man and woman.

First. Faith.

Paul says, "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Faith is credence of a statement, reliance on a promise, trust in engagements. Faith in God enabled Moses to bring from under the tyrannical power of Pharaoh 3,000,000 Israelites. Faith in God enabled Gideon, with 300 men, to put to flight 32,000 Philistines. It is necessary that we have faith in God in order to win in the battle against sin, and it is necessary that we have faith in ourselves, in order to win in the battle of life. The one who has lost faith in himself is in a bad condition, regardless of how much money he may possess, or how many friends he may have, and the man who hasn't lost faith in himself, regardless of how poverty or adverse circumstances may have struck him, has a good chance to win.

When I was in Minnesota ten years ago, I met a man who, ten years before that time, was only earning fifty dollars a month, teaching school. He was always tampering with real estate and very often losing, because of the smallness of his capital. The storekeepers would not let him have anything on credit; nevertheless, he kept his head above the water by having faith in his ability and ultimate success. When I met him he was worth one million and a quarter, and the storekeepers who had no faith in him in the days of his struggle, were tripping each other to shake his hand.

When Billy Sunday began to preach he did not get much of a hearing, nor were his efforts very successful. But Billy had faith in God, in the old-fashioned religion, and in himself, and today there is a greater demand for his services, despite severe criticism, than for the services of any other evangelist.

A few days ago I read an account of a man, who, during the Spanish-American War, was rendered almost penniless, and his friends gave him up as being down and out. But he never lost faith in his ability, but kept watching for an opportunity, and it came; for since the European war began he has made \$500,000.

I cite these illustrations for the purpose of inspiring you to a successful culmination of your desire, and may your greatest wish be for the glory of God and the betterment of man.

Second. Virtue.

Virtue is moral excellence—practice of duty. The virtuous person discerning his duty will perform it at all costs.

Paul and Peter (and, in fact, all the Apostles) laid down their lives for the Christian cause, believing it to be their duty. They knew the Lord and the power of His gospel and the world's need of it, hence their self-sacrifice.

Elizabeth Fry felt that she was called of God to work in the prisons of England for the redemption of criminals, and she did.

Florence Nightingale felt that she ought to be on the battlefield during the Crimean war, helping the wounded, and she went, and her services were a blessing to the crippled, and an example of self-abnegation.

Jane Addams of Chicago, and Maud Ballington Booth of New York, are good examples of duty performers; and since the present war started thousands of fine young ladies have given their services to help the wounded, and thousands of fine young men have laid down their lives in defense of their countries, believing it to be their duty.

When Blucher, whose timely arrival at Waterloo prevented Napoleon employing his reserves on Wellington's troops, had been toiling for days across spongy valleys toward the scene of conflict, his men wanted to lie down, but Blucher said, "I have given

Wellington my word, and you won't make me break it."

When we accepted Christ as our Saviour we gave Him our word that unto death we would be faithful; may that word never be broken, and if it has, may we not be discouraged but begin over again.

Third. Knowledge.

Knowledge is clear perception, enlightenment. It will be impossible for our faith in God to become strong or our sense of duty to Him be clear, if our mind is not enlightened regarding His demands and His promises. The man who, as a rule, gets to the top in every line, is the man who knows, for knowledge is a power which cannot be hidden; the successful doctor is one who makes a study of everything he finds in the medical world. The successful lawyer is the one whose mind is alert on everything in connection with his calling. And the successful Christian is the one who knows most about the book which speaks of the redemption of man through the love of God and by the sacrifice of Christ. May no one turn away from the Bible, saying, "It is not a book of learning." If interested in astronomy the Bible speaks of the "Sun of Righteousness" and the "Star of Bethlehem." If interested in botany the Word of God tells about the "Lily of the Valley," the "Rose of Sharon" and the "Plant of Renown." If interested in geology, within the covers of this, the grandest book that was ever written, you may

learn something of the "Rock of Ages" and the "White Stone" with the name engraven thereon. If interested in history, you can here read of the origin of the world, the creation and progress of man, and the rise and fall of nations. May all who read this little sermon have an increase of faith in God, a keener sense of duty, and a greater desire for that knowledge which is as lasting as the hills.

WITHOUT A WEDDING GARMENT

Matthew 22: 11

And when the king came in he saw there a man who had not on a wedding garment.

In this chapter we are told of a wealthy man who made a feast and invited many to it. A great many responded and enjoyed the repast, but one man came and entered who paid no attention to the rules of the house. It was the custom in those days and in the far East for those who were invited to marriage feasts to wear wedding garments. This particular man, however, entered and sat down at the table without one. The king came in to see his guests, and finding one without the wedding garment, he said, "Friend, how camest thou in hither not having on the wedding garment?" and we are told that he was speechless. Then, said the king, "Catch him, and bind him, and cast him into outer darkness, there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth." I have been wondering why he didn't comply with the rules of the house when he accepted the invitation and attended the supper, and I have concluded that it must have been carelessness, indolence, or hatred, that stood in the way. At any rate, whatever was the reason for

such an attitude, it was not considered an excuse, for he was speechless and received his just punishment. Let us, for a few minutes, look at the reasons which I think might have led to such an insult to the king, and brought about such a punishment to the guilty.

First. Carelessness.

Carelessness has ruined thousands, while carefulness has lifted an equal number from low estate to high position and influence.

David Maydoke, the inventor of the modern hammer, made the first one for his own use, because he couldn't find one to suit him. He made it so well that a neighbor bought one and praised it to such an extent that the town merchant bought one, and he praised it so that a hardware company in New York gave him an order for all he could make. In a few years his fortune was made and all because of his carefulness in work and precision in finish. There is no room for carelessness in the business world, nor in the social world, and there should be no room for it in the kingdom of God.

A professional man may have a diploma from the leading school in the country, and a servant may have the highest recommendation in written form from former employers, but they don't amount to anything if those who possess them do not make good in their vocation.

May we give our best to God in service, that will

prove our love for Him, and be the greatest blessing to man.

Second. Indolence.

The man without the wedding garment was perhaps so indolent that he didn't want to trouble himself, except when it was absolutely necessary, and not even then, if he could avoid it. Indolence is found in all walks of life and will thrive on any soil.

Coleridge was a man of brilliant intellect, but lazy, and if it hadn't been for that he might have been looked to as being the greatest scholar of his day. Robert Nicoll wrote of him, "What a mighty intellect was lost in that man for want of a little energy and determination." Busy men have always been honored of God. When Moses was called to be the leader of Israel and greatest statesman of his time, he was at work. When Gideon was called to service for God, through which his name has become a household word, he was at work on the threshing floor; when Matthew was honored with a place among the first of Christ's disciples, he was at work as a Publican. When Peter and John were called to be fishers of men, they were mending their nets, and so on along the line, busy men have been honored of God.

A Norwegian, who had visited all countries, was asked on his return if he could think of any trait in connection with humanity that might be looked

upon as being universal, and his answer was, "Me tink dat all men love lazy." May the reviving power of God's spirit so move us that indolence may not find a foothold in our life.

Third. Hatred.

It may have been that somebody was at the feast whom he didn't like, and because of that, determined to be as disagreeable as possible. Hatred has been in this world since Cain killed Abel, and it will remain as long as man inhabits this planet. We find it in every walk of life, from kings and czars down to rag-gatherers and chimney-sweeps.

At a Baptist convention Dr. Broughton could hardly make himself shake hands with a colored man, his hatred of that race was so great; but finally the grace of God enabled him to conquer that feeling, and he learned that God had made of one blood all nations of men. He shook hands with the colored brother, and there was joy in both hearts and in heaven too, over race hatred being defeated. Have you accepted the invitation to enter the kingdom of God? If so, I hope that you have complied with the rules of the kingdom. If you have, enjoyment is yours now, and will be in the future, and you can sing:

"There is no condemnation,
There is no hell for me;
The torments and the fire,
Mine eyes shall never see."

If carelessness, indolence or hatred are in the kingdom of Christ today, may they be eliminated, and with every other sin buried in the depths of the sea; and above every other note in sacred music may this one swell, "My Jesus hath done all things well."

THE WATER OF LIFE

Isaiah 55: 1

Ho, everyone that thirsteth, come ye to the waters,
and he that hath no money, come.

The world today is made up of thirsty men and women, and it is remarkable how far we will go and what we will do in order to gratify that desire.

I wish to speak this evening of three or four kinds of thirst.

First. Knowledge.

This should be so, not only in connection with secular education, but also in connection with spiritual attainments.

Paul advises Timothy to study, and his own desire was, "Oh, that I might know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His suffering."

Captain Cook never went to school a day until he was fourteen, but he became one of the best and greatest navigators that ever spread his sails to the breeze to cross the stormy sea.

John Bunyan never went to school a day, but he became the immortal dreamer, a Baptist minister of note and one of the best exponents of the English tongue.

John A. Johnson, of Minnesota, born in poverty and cradled in want, and denied in youth an education; over-topped every difficulty and became the beloved governor of Minnesota.

Abraham Lincoln, before whom the hat of every lover of liberty is doffed, began the battle of life with no mental equipment as far as the schools were concerned, but he became America's greatest president.

Why did these men succeed? The answer is simple: They thirsted for real knowledge which, when acquired, was applied in such a way as commanded the respect of the people, and proved a blessing to mankind.

May our thirst for knowledge not only be intensified, but gratified, by getting the best.

Second. Riches.

I wonder how many of us really mean it when we sing that verse:

“Lord, I care not for riches,
Neither silver nor gold.”

At the age of thirty, John D. Rockefeller was a poor man, but at the age of sixty he stood among the wealthiest in the world. At the age of eleven Andrew Carnegie was working in a factory for a few dollars a month, but before he reached sixty he began to distribute the biggest pile of gold that any one man ever possessed.

Why do men leave the sacred ties of home and early friendship and cross the sea to this country? Many of them do it in quest of gold. Why do many Americans leave comfortable homes and live on isolated claims for years in Arizona and New Mexico? It is because some day they expect those claims to make large returns and hoist them to the pinnacle of wealth.

Oh, may we have a thirst for heaven's wealth, which is pardon for sin, peace of conscience, joy in the Holy Ghost, increase of grace, and perseverance in Christian work.

Third. Pleasure.

Why is it that the nickel shows are so well attended, the dance halls patronized, and the river steam-boats on Sunday packed? It is because of quest of pleasure. I enjoy pleasure as much as anybody, but I will venture the assertion that I get more pleasure out of a good arousing, soothing and satisfying gospel meeting, than the worldly get out of any purely worldly entertainment.

“I love thy kingdom, Lord,
The house of thine abode;
The church our blest Redeemer saved
With His own precious blood.”

Fourth. Spirituality.

Why was it that three thousand souls were added to the church at Pentecost? Why was it that recently thirty thousand people professed conversion in

Philadelphia? It was because they had tried the cisterns of world pleasure and found that they lacked satisfaction.

Why do we attend church, Sunday school and the mid-week service? I hope that it is because we are thirsting for the water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and the lamb.

After one of the battles of the Civil War a chaplain was coming down the Tennessee River with a company of wounded soldiers. It was in the spring-time and the water was muddy. One of the soldiers wanted a drink; the chaplain got it for him, but he drank only a little and handed back the glass, saying: "I wish I had a drink from my father's well." The muddy water of the Tennessee didn't satisfy the thirsty soldier.

And friends, we may thirst for knowledge and riches and pleasure and get them, but they will be muddy compared with the "sparkling water of life."

It will satisfy, and it is free; nothing to pay. Come and drink.

DO IT WITH THY MIGHT

Ecclesiastes 9:10

Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might.

This advice comes down to us from one of the most interesting men that ever lived—Solomon. When he became king, at an early age, he offered one of the most remarkable prayers ever uttered by an earthly ruler. In substance it was: “Give me grace and wisdom that I might be able to guide Thy people, and to lead them in Thy service unto victory.” His prayer was answered, and his wisdom excelled that of any monarch who preceded him; and I doubt if anyone since has had half as much real knowledge. His success was far-famed, and was due to his faith in God and the whole-souled way in which he entered into anything that commanded his attention. Though dead nearly three thousand years, his advice is worth remembering, meditating upon, and putting into action.

The topic which is suggested from this statement is, “Duty;” and I want to show you that men who have made their mark in the world and in the church have been men who discovered their duty and did it, regardless of the cost. Nathan, the prophet, had a

disagreeable task to perform, that of drawing the attention of the king to his wickedness; but he did it, and ever since his bravery has been extolled. Amos, the prophet, found that it was necessary not only to rebuke the old church for her sinfulness, but also her leaders for hypocrisy. His was no easy task, and, in spite of the fact that persecution stared him in the face, Amos did his duty and won.

John the Baptist might have saved his head if he had kept silent regarding the conduct of Herod, but he felt that duty comes first, and so he died at his post; and today he has a large place in the heart of every enthusiastic follower of the Son of God.

It was duty that led David Brainard to preach to North American Indians the Gospel of Christ, despite the dangers connected with the undertaking; and that sent David Livingstone into darkest Africa, in which the foot of white man had never before trodden. The work of these men was greatly blessed wherever they went, and they shall be spoken of with pride by generations, yet unborn.

Listen to Paul as he says: "I am not only ready to be bound, but to die at Jerusalem." This he said to weeping companions who besought him not to risk his life in that wicked city. Duty to Paul was paramount to all other things; it was second to nothing on earth.

When Sidney, the immortal English patriot, was told that he could save his life by denying his own

handwriting, and thus tell a falsehood, he replied: "When God has brought me into a dilemma in which I must assert a lie or lose my life, He gives me a clear indication of my duty, which is to prefer death to falsehood." A higher sense of duty, or personal respect for it, is not found in any record. It hallows life by making death a secondary consideration.

At the battle of Trafalgar, Nelson raised his voice and said, "England expects every man to do his duty." It was a terrific battle, and he was mortally wounded; but he won, and died saying: "Thank God, I have done my duty."

Now, in connection with the average life, duty in three spheres demands our attention, and I am speaking now to Christians.

First. Duty in the home.

John Howard Payne was right when he said,

"Mid pleasures and palaces, though we may roam,
Be it ever so humble, there's no place like home."

Fathers and mothers have opportunities for doing good in the home that cannot be found anywhere else. And if those opportunities are neglected it may be impossible to recover them. I have read of a father who went out into the meadows for a walk with his little son. After a while he sat down under a tree to rest and fell fast asleep. When he awoke he couldn't find his boy. In desperation he shouted

his name again and again, but there was no answer save the echo of his cry. Finally, running to a cliff in the distance, he looked over the edge, and there on a crag below, he saw the mangled form of his only son. From that hour until the day of his death the father could not be consoled, but blamed his carelessness for the destruction of his boy.

In the spiritual sense that very thing is happening in many homes today. Everywhere the pitfalls of sin are yawning to engulf the youth of our land; it is the duty of parents to warn their boys and girls of such places, and not leave that important task to pastors and Sunday school teachers. And fathers and mothers neglecting this, you may go to the grave with broken hearts, because of the spiritual catastrophe of those entrusted to your care.

Second. Duty in business.

When I was a boy in the second reader, I remember that a head-line in my copy-book was, "Honesty is the best policy." And if a man finds that he cannot be honest in his calling, whether he be employer or employee, the very best thing he can do is give up the business. Dr. Gray tells us of a young man in Chicago who left his position because he became convinced that he couldn't stay in it and be a Christian. In a short time, however, he had gotten a better position in every sense, and step by step went up the ladder of success. And I am convinced that the man who gives up anything for righteousness sake

will receive something better from the hand of God in return.

Third. Duty in the church.

A young man was asked, on one occasion, what persuasion he belonged to, meaning denomination, and his answer was Paul's, or: "I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day."

He didn't belong to any particular denomination, but he loved the Lord and sought to serve him in sincerity and in truth.

I am of the opinion, however, that it is well for us to belong to some particular denomination, in order to accomplish the most good in our short stay here. Therefore, it is ours to select the denomination with which we feel we can serve God best and be a credit to that denomination. If it has any weak places, we should try to strengthen them, and with its principles we should be thoroughly acquainted.

May we never forget that any fool can criticize, but that it takes a great soul to do things that are worth while. So, whether in home, or in business, or in the church, may we remember the injunction of the world's wisest man:

"Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might."

ENDURING TO THE END

Matthew 10: 22

But he that endureth to the end shall be saved.

“Must I be carried to the skies,
On flowery beds of ease,
While others fought to win the prize,
And sailed through bloody seas?”

The text implies that the living of the Christian life, and the promulgating of the gospel of God's son will be no easy task. It means a fight with foes, seen and unseen, but if we demonstrate the bravery that Christ would have us possess, a sure reward will be ours. If we would be successful, there are at least two things we must endure.

First. It will be necessary for us to bear unkind criticism. The Saviour saw trials in this direction ahead of His followers, and to encourage them He said, “Blessed are ye when men shall revile you and persecute you and say all manner of evil against you falsely for My sake.” “Behold, I send you forth as sheep into the midst of wolves.” “Beware of those who come to you in sheep's clothing, but who are inwardly as ravening wolves.” “Fear not them that kill the body and after that can do no more, but rather fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.”

Now, as Christ predicted, so it came to pass, for the disciples were scattered abroad, but to their honor wherever they went they preached the Word. But alas, when persecution arrives many of the church members of today throw up their hands in defeat. You will observe that I didn't say Christians, but church members, for there is a vast difference sometimes. Pliable Peter was a member of the church; one day this man boasted of his loyalty to Christ and the next day, in the company of the world, he denied Him with cursing and swearing. Judas was treasurer, and he got to like the money so well that he sold his Master for thirty pieces of silver, then haunted by an accusing conscience, he went and hanged himself, and his money was spent in buying a cemetery to bury strangers in.

Ananias and Sapphira were church members too, but my! what liars they were, and what a terrible end they met. As long as the disciples of Christ keep quiet and close their eyes to the evils of the day, they will have smooth sailing; but, if, with open eyes, and raised head and emphatic gesture, and ringing testimony, they show up dirty tricks of cheap politicians, and every sinner, whether moral or degraded, their sin persecution will at once begin and unkind criticism will be heard.

A Chinese merchant was openly baptized during the Boxer uprising, as he wanted to have a share in suffering for the sake of Christ.

Second. It will be imperative that we suffer self-abnegation, "Though He was rich, yet, for our sakes, He became poor, that we thru His poverty might become rich." He was and still is the grand example. If a king or czar or emperor in this age were to come down from the throne and even mingle for a day with ordinary folks, the newspapers would be filled with words of praise for them; but think of Jesus, what He did, and how little the world makes of His self-sacrifice.

Matthew, the rich Publican, gave up his lucrative position to follow Christ, and he will always be referred to by the Church with pride.

Mr. Moody gave up the shoe business, in which he might have become a millionaire, in order that he might pursue the calling of an evangelist, but look at the honored place God gave him.

Billy Sunday, at his conversion, gave up a \$4,000 position as baseball player, to accept a \$1,000 job in the Y. M. C. A., of Chicago; but look at him today.

A young man said, regarding his brother who was going to fever-stricken Africa, to preach to the natives, "Jim is a fool, giving his life for a few niggers; he'll be dead in six months." He was the one who died, and recent reports from Africa show that Jim is very much alive and the work he is doing is advancing the kingdom of God in that country and will evidently stamp his name in the history of Africa as being one of its greatest benefactors. Now,

my text says, "He that endureth to the end shall be saved." It is natural for us to ask at this time, Saved from what and to what? My answer is:

First. From sin.

We will always be troubled with sin, but sin shall not have dominion over us. Peter was troubled with sin, but he arose victor in the name of Christ. David was troubled also, but by the power of God he won the fight. John B. Gough was knocked down into the gutter of sin, after his conversion, but he arose, and by the power of God made Satan and his kingdom tremble.

Second. Saved to an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled and that fadeth not away.

The promise which Christ made to His disciples was a promise for all of His disciples in all the ages: "I go to prepare a place for you, but if I go and prepare a place for you I will come again and receive you unto Myself." Friends, He is coming again. Are you looking for Him? Are you suffering for His sake? Are you telling His good news to others?

HOME COMING

Malachi 3:7

Return unto me.

One of the saddest stories I have ever read, having a joyful ending, is that of a young girl, who ran away from home, got in with the wrong crowd and almost broke her mother's heart.

The mother went to a city missionary and told the whole story to him, and then said, "Do you think that you can find my daughter for me?" He said, "I think so, but you will have to do what I tell you to do." She said, "I will do anything you want me to do in order to get her back." "Very well, then, I want you to go and get your picture taken, have it taken large size, and then write under each photograph the words, 'Come Home;' when this is done, bring me a hundred of them." She did so, and returned with the pictures. "Now," said he, "I want you to give me permission to have these put on the walls of saloons and worse places throughout this city." She said, "Hang them anywhere you want to. I want my daughter back again." The missionary placed the pictures in vile places, and one night a group of revelers entered one of those places and

among them was the girl; looking across the counter she saw the photograph that looked familiar. She walked around to see if she had made no mistake, and there, to her surprise was not only her mother's picture, but her mother's invitation, in her mother's handwriting. An invitation with only two words, "Come Home," but what a meaning.

Everywhere in this little book the prophecy of Malachi, we see a picture not of God's face alone, but of His heart too, and underneath is written to His wandering children "Return unto Me." But how may I return to Him?

First. By repentance.

"Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord and He will have mercy upon him and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon."

An Irish Catholic lay near the gates of death, a Bible given him by a colporteur had been read, and the gospel, by its means, had reached his heart. The parish priest came to administer to him the last rites of the church. "Confess your sins to me," said the priest, and raising himself from the pillow, the dying man said, "Your Reverence, you are 1800 years too late. Jesus Christ has, by His precious blood, put my sins away, and my soul is at peace." With bell and book the converted Catholic was excommunicated from the Roman Catholic Church the next Sun-

day, but at the same hour his ransomed spirit went up to be with Christ.

Second. By prayer.

“Prayer is the soul’s sincere desire,
Uttered or unexpressed,
The motion of a hidden fire,
That trembles in the breast.”

Hitherto ye have asked nothing in particular, but everything in general; ask therefore, for something definite, and look for it and you will get it.

David says, “I waited for the Lord, and He inclined unto me and heard me cry.” He again says, “This poor man cried and the Lord heard him and saved him from all his troubles.”

An old lady in Gloucestershire was approached by a scoffer one morning, who said, “I am hard up, I need five pounds. Do you think if I asked the Lord for that amount that He would grant it?” She very wisely answered, “You’ll have to wait until you are better acquainted with Him.” So with many of us I fear the reason our prayers are not answered is because our acquaintance with God is not very intimate.

Third. By sacrifice.

Everyone who returns to God has something to give up, but with most it is only a burden of sin.

Bad companions of a fascinating type stand between some and their coming back to God. They

did so with Richard Weaver, but he had the grit to say,

“My old companions, fare ye well,
I will not go with you to hell,
I mean with Jesus Christ to dwell,
Let me go, let me go.”

A man by the name of Pliable and another whose name was Worldly Wiseman, stood between John Bunyan and his coming back to God, but he, who began the work of grace in Bunyan's heart, led him from the snare of Pliable and the Slough of Despond into the old homestead of heaven.

It was riches that stood between the young ruler and coming home to God. Christ said, “Go and sell that which thou hast, and give to the poor, and come take up the cross and follow Me,” but he went away sorrowful, for he was the owner of great possessions. Christ had no intention of making a pauper out of that youth, for He intended giving him ten-fold more in this life than he had, and in the world to come life everlasting. It was dancing that stood between a young woman and coming back home to God. She went to Dr. John Hall of New York, and said, “Dr. Hall, in order to become a Christian must I give up dancing?” Dr. Hall said, “If Christ wants you to, you must be prepared to do so.” “Well, then,” said she, “if I have to choose between coming home to God and dancing, I choose dancing and the other can go.”

How many here tonight are safely on the way
home? How many are going to begin?

“O, do not let this word depart,
Nor close thine eyes against the light,
Poor sinner, harden not thy heart,
Thou wouldst be saved, why not to-night?”

Come home to God.

IS IT WELL WITH THEE?

2nd Kings 4: 26

Is it Well with Thee?

This is the question which Elisha commanded his servant to ask the Shunammite spoken of in this chapter, and I believe that it is a suitable question for everyone at any time, but especially at the close of the year. It may be well with some of you socially, it may be well with some of you financially, it may be well with some of you vocationally, but is it well with you spiritually? You say, "I don't know;" well, let me ask you three questions:

First. Are you saved from the power of sin?

Sin has been in the world ever since the forbidden fruit was eaten in Eden, and it will remain in the world as long as man lives and Satan is unchained. But it is possible for you to be saved from the power of sin, and that safety is brought about through making Christ your personal Saviour. Wesley was right when he wrote:

"He breaks the power of cancelled sin,
And sets the prisoner free."

If young men and women who today are bound by the fetters of sin and slaves to degrading habits would only give Christ a chance, those fetters would

be snapped in the twinkling of an eye, and they would be made clean men and women.

Years ago a young Scotchman from the Highlands of that country, landed in New York. Shortly after his arrival a Christian man went to him and asked him to be a Christian. He was met with a sneer. "Why," said the young man, "I have a character as rugged as the country I came from; I don't need Christ." In New York his character began to slip, and in Chicago he made a complete wreck of himself. Another friend went to visit him in the hospital in Chicago, but the doctor refused to allow him to enter the room where the young man lay. Said he, "You could no more touch him than you could a leper." "But I have come to pray with him," said the Christian man, and the hospital door swung open, and there, lying on a cot, was the young Scotchman, his eyes could scarcely close, his tongue and lips could hardly articulate, and the joints of the body were beginning to separate. "My God!" said the visitor, "Isn't it awful?" "Don't touch him," said the doctor. "You must not touch him." The poor fellow turned his head on the pillow, and said, "Mr. Smith, if I prayed to God, do you think He would save me? Drop on your knees and pray for me." When Mr. Smith prayed he tried to raise himself on his elbow, and said, "Tell the young men of the United States that sin is too mighty for them to resist."

My friend, you need a Saviour from sin, and if you haven't one, it is not well with you.

Second. Are you sanctified?

I mean by this, have you found your place in Christ's kingdom, and are you using your talents for the furtherance of His cause and the welfare of man?

John A. Johnson, of Minnesota, was born in poverty, cradled in want and hemmed in by seemingly unsurmountable obstacles, but he found his place, and step by step walked up the ladder of fame and sat on the top of the highest pinnacle of his native state, for the people of that state thought enough of him to elect him by a large majority to the governorship. What John A. Johnson was enabled to do in the commercial and political world can be done in the spiritual world by the man who gives himself unreservedly to the service of Christ. Religious history is glowing with accounts of the remarkable achievements of those who rose from low estate to high position and ecclesiastical fame. If you have not found your place in the realm of truth and purity and using your God-given talents there, you can not truthfully say, "It is well with me."

Third. Are you happy?

I do not mean spasmodically, but is there a continuous springing well of joy rising in your soul? The man who knows what true happiness is, can truthfully sing, or at least say,

“Oh, happy day that fixed my choice
On Thee, my Saviour and my God,
Well may this glowing heart rejoice
And tell its raptures all abroad.”

Some folks think that an abundance of health is all that is necessary in order to secure happiness. This is a mistake, however, for nearly every day men and women of wealth are committing suicide. A short time ago a man, worth twenty millions of dollars, said to another, “All the money I have earned, and all there is in the bank to my credit, has never secured for me peace of mind.” And where there is no peace of mind there can be no real happiness. Some people think that literary accomplishments will make them happy, but history and observation prove that these alone will not.

Burns, who, to my way of thinking, was the greatest poet that ever lived, everything considered, reveals the fact in many of his gems that he knew nothing about Christian happiness. For instance,

“Still thou art blest compared wi’ me!
The present only toucheth thee;
But och! I backward cast my e’e
On prospects drear!
An’ forward tho’ I canna see,
I guess and fear!”

If it is well with you, you are saved from the power of sin, set apart for holy living and Christian effort, and you are happy in the best sense. If it is not

well with you, why not get these great blessings at once; perhaps you have tried and failed, but listen!

It is said that one of Napoleon's marshals rode up to him and said, "General, I fear the battle is lost." Napoleon calmly looked at his watch, and replied: "There is time for another battle; summon the army to a fresh charge." We are told that they won the day, and so will you if you put yourself into the hands of our great Commander, Christ.

ENDURING TO THE END

Matthew 10: 22

But he that endureth to the end shall be saved.

Christ was sending out His disciples to evangelize the world, but before they started on their mission he gathered them around Him and warned them of the dangers connected with that undertaking, closing His remarks with the statement of the text. He is still sending out His disciples, and will continue to do so as long as time lasts, and His warning and promise are the same. There are some qualities we must possess if we would succeed in this great work.

First. We must have that quality known as perseverance.

Some one has said that perseverance is singleness of purpose and application on the home stretch. It is going to the end of the long pull, the strong pull, and the pull together. The negro expressed it very well when he said, "Perseverance is to take right hold, hold fast, hang on, and no let go."

"How does Grant impress you as a leading general?" was the question put to Lincoln; and Lincoln replied, "Because he is not easily excited and he has the grip of the bull-dog. When once he gets his teeth in, nothing can shake him off."

When Columbus was in search of the New World,

his crew became discouraged and rose in rebellion. They insisted upon turning back instead of going on a fool's errand. They thought there was no new world to be found, and under the circumstances he was obliged to compromise with them. So he promised that if they would be patient he would turn in three days, unless land was in sight. Before the three days had gone by the new world burst upon their view and America was the price of his perseverance.

Many years ago a student was rendered blind by a missile, which was thrown by a class-mate. His father, who was an eminent lawyer, was educating him for the bar, but this calamity changed his plan. Strange as it may seem, the boy resolved to become an author. He spent ten years of close, systematic study, using the eyes of an assistant, before selecting his theme. Then he spent ten more years in exploring archives, old libraries, official documents and chronicles. As a result of this perseverance there fell from his pen the "History of Ferdinand and Isabella," "Mexico," "Peru," and "Philip the Second," works which sent his name around the world as that of a great historian.

May we receive from the hand of God for effective service the gift of perseverance.

Second. In order to persevere we must be determined. It will be an impossibility to persevere in anything if we are not determined.

The coveted goal of the century's quest has been discovered because Admiral Peary was determined to find it. Nearly twenty-five years did he spend in pursuit of his one unwavering aim, and never once did his faith or determination wane.

The late John A. Johnson of Minnesota, when defeated twice for the senate, said: "I think I get along because I can chum with the man who beats me. It doesn't hurt me to get licked. There is nothing like knowing when not to quit." Regardless of difficulties, Johnson pressed forward, and as a reward for his splendid life, and almost unmatched determination, he was returned governor of Minnesota.

I am reminded here of a piece of poetry which I read awhile ago, and here it is:

"The shades of night were falling fast
As through an Alpine village passed
A youth who bore, 'mid snow and ice,
A banner with the strange device,
Excelsior!

His brow was sad, his eye beneath
Flashed like a falchion from its sheath;
And like a silver clarion rung
The accents of that unknown tongue,
Excelsior!

In happy homes he saw the light
Of household fires gleam warm and bright;
Above the spectral glaciers shone,
And from his lips escaped a groan,
Excelsior!

'Try not the pass,' the old man said;
'Dark lowers the tempest overhead;
The roaring torrent is deep and wide!'
And loud the clarion voice replied,

Excelsior!

'Oh, stay,' the maiden said, 'and rest
Thy weary head upon this breast!'
A tear stood in his bright blue eye,
But still he answered with a sigh,

Excelsior!

'Beware the pine tree's withered branch!
Beware the awful avalanche!'
This was the peasant's last goodnight;
A voice replied, far up the height,

Excelsior!

At break of day, as heavenward
The pious monks of Saint Bernard
Uttered the oft-repeated prayer,
A voice cried through the startled air,

Excelsior!

A traveller, by the faithful hound,
Half buried in the snow was found,
Still grasping in his hand of ice
That banner with the strange device,

Excelsior!

There in the twilight, cold and gray,
Lifeless, but beautiful, he lay;
And from the sky, serene and fair,
A voice fell, like a falling star,

Excelsior! "

May the highest in Christian excellence be our de-
termination.

Third. In order that we have the determination which is productive of perseverance, it will be necessary for us to be decisive in our choice.

In the Bible we find this question: "How long halt ye between two opinions?" We also find in the same grand old book the statement that "No man can serve two masters."

Patrick Henry, in one of the greatest speeches ever delivered in this country, asked the question: "Is life so dear or peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? Forbid it, Almighty God! I know not what course others may take, but as for me, give me liberty or give me death!" He was decisive in his choice, and who will say that he did not possess determination and perseverance?

Can we endure to the end? Decision answers in the affirmative.

Most of us know better than we do; decision enables us to do better than we know. At the beginning of the Civil War Grant thought that he couldn't lead a regiment, but his decision fitted him in two years to command many regiments. He did better than he knew.

I hope that this hour we make Christ and His cause our choice. This decision will be productive of the determination and perseverance which are necessary to a successful culmination of our God-given mission.

ABIDE WITH US

Luke 24: 29

Abide with us; for it is toward evening.

After the crucifixion of Jesus two of His disciples were journeying to a little village outside the city of Jerusalem. And as they went the Saviour Himself drew near and joined in their conversation, but strange to say they didn't know Him. The Saviour must have changed in appearance since the last time they saw Him, perhaps His suffering on the cross did it. Nothing changes the appearance of one more readily than suffering. I have heard of some folks' hair turning white in a night, because of intense agony. How often do we think of the suffering Jesus? Isn't it true that oftentimes we hear people say "What's the use; let us think of something more cheerful." The words of Burns are still true, "Man's inhumanity to man, makes countless thousands mourn."

Only one week has gone since the terrible boating accident in Chicago, and already not much is being said about it. I was horrified to read in the *Chicago Tribune*, of last Monday, that on Saturday night, while dead bodies were being taken from the river,

excursion boats, only a few yards away, were being filled with pleasure-seekers.

When Horace Greeley went as a boy from the country to New York City, to seek employment; a few doors from where he roomed some one had died. Young Greeley felt sorry for the bereaved ones and inquired from his landlady the cause of the death, and who had died. To his great surprise she met him with the iceberg answer, "It is none of my affairs." Greeley packed his trunk and went back home; he wanted to be where the milk of human kindness could be felt in time of sorrow.

Isn't it so that Jesus is a different Christ to many of us today than the Christ we heard of in our youth? One draws our attention to a warlike Jesus, and another draws our attention to a sympathetic Jesus. One artist paints Christ with face effeminate and another artist paints Him with face despotic. I think, however, that most of us agree, that we shall never know just what Jesus looks like until we wash the last sleep from our eyes in the refreshing river of heaven.

There are three thoughts connected with the sentence at the top of this sermon, which, to my mind, are both interesting and suggestive.

First. They invited Jesus to stay with them that night. They were hospitable disciples. Nothing makes a stranger feel more at home than hospitality of the whole-souled type. Hospitality is kindness to

every one in general, and to strangers in particular. How often do we hear of the far-famed Southern hospitality and the praise which comes from those who have been in touch with it? Church members could well learn a lesson in this, from those early disciples.

Quite often strangers have come to me and said: "We feel just as much at home in your church as if we belonged to it," and, of course, I have been glad to hear them say so.

Christ had often invited these disciples to come and rest; now they invite Him. It may have been natural for them to be hospitable, and it may have been that companionship with Jesus for three years made them so. If the latter, then we see the power of good company and a grand example. Courtiers are the most polite and courteous citizens one can possibly meet, and the reason for that is, because they are often in the king's presence. May we never be out of our King's presence.

Second. He accepted their invitation.

Christ never refuses to enter and bless a home, where He is invited. They certainly got a surprise, some folks had entertained angels unawares, but they had the very Son of God in their home. And how sacred that home must have become, and how reserved the seat He occupied.

On one occasion Queen Victoria visited Scotland, and when touring in the Highlands a great rainstorm

came up. She entered a little cottage until the storm passed. When she left, the old lady who owned it, got a ribbon and wound it around the chair, saying, "Just think, Queen Victoria sat in this chair, isn't it wonderful?" and from that day until her death she never allowed any one to occupy that chair.

When Christ comes into our life, how careful we should be that no intruder, such as Satan, obscene display, or questionable literature, occupy for one moment the highest seat which we have given to Him.

A drunken bum, on one occasion, was presented with a frock coat, on the ground that he never disgrace it. A year later he saw the man who gave it to him, and going up to him said, "I am still wearing your coat, and praise God I haven't disgraced it either by getting drunk. Many a time, when tempted to take a drink, I thought of you."

May we keep clean the garment with which we are presented by Christ, when He comes into our hearts.

Third. They invited Him because it was toward evening.

The foxes had holes and the birds of the air had nests, but the Son of God had not where to lay His head. There was no room for Him in the inn; there was no room for Him in the affairs of men; there was no room for Him in the synagogue, but praise God, there was room for Him, at least during the

night, in that little home so near the city where He was crucified.

Many put off inviting Him into their heart until it is toward evening. How much better it is to invite Him in the morning of life. And then you could sing regarding His friendship, "It is sweeter as the years go by."

I visited a young man who was on his deathbed some time ago, and he told me that if he had his life to live over again how much more devoted to Christ it would be than it had been. The fact was this, he didn't invite Christ to come in and tabernacle with him, until it was almost night. If you have never invited Him to take complete possession of you, do it now, and then you won't have to say:

"Must I go, and empty-handed
Must I meet my Saviour so?
Not one soul with which to greet him,
Must I empty-handed go?"

WHY MEN WON'T COME TO CHRIST

John 5: 40

And ye will not come unto me, that ye might have life.

This is one of the saddest utterances that ever fell from the lips of Christ.

After healing their sick, and cleansing their lepers, and raising their dead, and casting out devils, He was compelled to say, "And ye will not come unto Me that ye might have life." Nearly 1900 years have gone since then, and during all that time wonders have been worked by Christ through the Holy Spirit and human instrumentality for the benefit of men, and yet very many of them will not come unto Him.

They remind me of a story that John Anderson, the Scotch evangelist, told. Said he, "One morning, while at breakfast, I saw a little robin on the snow-covered window-sill; it was very cold and hungry looking. I raised the window and put out my hand with some crumbs on it. The robin came and picked up the crumbs. I thought it was so tame that all I had to do was to turn over my hand and lift it, but when I attempted to do so it flew away." Is that not like the way the average man is treating God? He receives every needed blessing from Him, but

when sought for the Kingdom of Christ he runs away.

I am going to speak to you at this time of some reasons why I think that men and women are staying outside the Kingdom of God.

First. Because of the love of sin.

Sin has been in the world ever since our first parents disobeyed God in Eden, and it will remain as long as man lives or time lasts. David says, "Behold, I was born in sin and shapen in iniquity." Paul says, "There is no difference, for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." Sin has ruined homes and wrecked lives and sent young men and women to the grave years before their time. Dr. Guthrie says, "Like a snowdrift, when it has leveled the church-yard mounds, and glistening in the winter sun, lies so pure and fair and beautiful above the dead, who fester and rot below; a very plausible profession, wearing the semblance of innocence, may conceal from human eyes the foulest heart corruption. The grass grows upon a mountain that holds a volcano in its bowels. Behind the rosy cheek and soft lustrous eye of beauty, how often does there lurk a deadly disease, the deadliest of all! Even so sin has its seat within. It is a disease of the heart, and the worst of all heart complaints."

At the close of a revival service in a church in Chicago one night a young man was urged to come to Christ, but he would not. And the reason he gave

was worded something like this: "I am entangled in the meshes of a disgusting sin, and I am not ready to give it up."

The Christian can truthfully say:

"O cross of Christ, like ocean depths,
My sins are swallowed up in thee;
Covered is my unrighteousness
And from its course my soul set free."

Second. The love of pleasure.

The average man, with his limited knowledge of the Bible, is of the opinion that coming to Christ will rob him of enjoyment for the remainder of his life; while the truth of the matter is this: The happiest people on earth are those enlisted in heaven's army and who are fighting the good fight of faith. I think it was Talmage who said, "When I see a man of regal nature made to rule in the realm of thought, capable of all moral elevation, besotting his faculties and attempting out of low sensualities to satisfy his immoral energies, coming down from the throne of truth and morality and dipping himself in the mire of sinful pleasure, I feel like shouting, 'Man, you have lost your kingdom and are on your way to absolute ruin.'" I believe it was the same preacher who said, "when I see a woman whom God hath endowed with influence more than imperial and magnetism of personal presence and charm of smile and manner, capable of soothing deep-set sorrow, coming down from the throne of purity and finding her only

delight in the midnight gaiety of the ballroom and the flatteries of brain-bewildered men, a spectacle of vanity and frivolity, I feel like shouting, 'Woman, you have lost your kingdom, and all because of the love of sinful pleasure.''' The Christian enjoyment is real, while men and women of the world often look happy when they are not far from being miserable.

I have in mind a man who lived in St. Louis, and who was looked on by those who knew him as being the happiest man they ever met. But he was a worldling and cared nothing for the Church of God. I shook hands with him one night at the close of a picnic, and he looked happy, but the next day at noon, he drank carbolic acid, committing suicide, and proving that underneath his apparent pleasure he was of all men most miserable.

Third. Because of the fear of man.

I am of the opinion that there are more cowards in the world than we anticipate, and that the chief reason why a good many men and women will not become Christians is because of the fear of men. Solomon says, "The fear of man bringeth a snare," and Christ says, "Fear not them that kill the body and after that can do no more, but rather fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." There are many young men and women in the slums of our cities tonight living a life of sin, and all because they were afraid of offending a so-called friend

by refusing to go to a place of questionable amusement with him. A man told me about being out with the boys one evening and, despite the fact that he had made a profession of conversion and was a church member, at their request he went into a saloon with them. And when they were ordering their drinks he ordered the same kind, with the result that he became intoxicated, and for years afterward he lived the life of a backslider. I believe that there are tens of thousands of people living today, who could testify as that man did.

What is it that is keeping you away from Christ? Is it the love of sin? Is it the love of sinful pleasure? Is it the fear of man? Whatever keeps you away from the Son of God is your enemy, no matter what it is, and better get rid of it. If you wish to break away from that which binds you in sin, remember that Christ will help you to do it. Wesley was right when he said:

“He breaks the power of cancelled sin,
He sets the prisoner free;
His blood can make the vilest clean,
His blood avails for me.”

THE SECOND COMING

James 5: 8

The coming of the Lord draweth nigh.

The second coming of Jesus Christ to this earth, to me is one of the interesting and precious promises in the word of God. And in this little sermon I am going to speak of the certainty of His coming, the purpose of His coming, and the time of His coming.

First. The certainty.

At His ascension the angels said to those who were present when He went up, "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven, for this same Jesus that ye have seen go into heaven shall so come in like manner."

When John was banished to the Isle of Patmos for preaching the gospel, God revealed to him a great many things which should come to pass, and the second coming of Jesus was one of them, as recorded in the first chapter of Revelation and worded: "Behold He cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see Him." The second coming is spoken of in the New Testament more than three hundred times; therefore, it must not only be a certainty, but also an event of great importance. But Satan has blinded

the eyes and hardened the heart and deafened the ears of many professing Christians regarding this great truth. In the days of Noah there were many who laughed at the prediction of a world deluge, but that did not alter God's plan, for the deluge came and all but eight persons were drowned. And Christ said: "As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be in the days of the coming of the Son of Man."

In the days of Lot many scoffed at the idea that Sodom was to be burned up, because of its wickedness; but that did not change God's plan, for Sodom was burned, and only Lot, his wife, and two daughters, escaped its flames. In the days of Jeremiah men were absolutely certain that a mistake had been made in the prophecy that Jerusalem with all its grandeur would be reduced to ruins. But historians outside of the Bible tell us that Jerusalem was overtaken with one of the most appalling sieges in the world's history, that its buildings were thrown down, and that its streets ran red with blood.

If the Bible is the Word of God (which I believe it to be), then Jesus Christ is coming again, regardless of how some good people may speak against it. A good way to judge the future regarding prophecy is by the past, and if the predictions of the past have come true, then why not believe the statements in the Bible regarding the future?

Dr. Gray has well said:

“Why say ye not a word of bringing back the king
“Why speak ye not of Jesus and his reign?
“Why tell ye of his glory and of his praises sing,
“But not a word about his coming back again?”

Second. The purpose.

Shortly before His crucifixion Christ said to His followers: “I go to prepare a place for you, and if I go and prepare a place for you I will come again and receive you unto Myself that where I am there ye may be also.” This is only part of the purpose of Christ’s coming, and the other part is found in the closing verses of the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew, relative to the wicked: “These shall go away into everlasting punishment.” So, from these quotations, we learn that Christ is coming to reward His followers and to punish His enemies.

The parable of the nobleman spoken of in the nineteenth chapter of Luke is a good illustration of what is happening now and of what will happen then. I believe that the interpretation of that parable is this: Christ is the Nobleman, His disciples are the servants, and His enemies are the non-Christian. Well might the hymn-writer say:

“Our Lord is now rejected,
And by the world disowned,
By the many still neglected
And by the few enthroned;

But soon He'll come in glory!
The hour is drawing nigh,
For the crowning day is coming
Bye-and-bye.

Our pain shall then be over,
We'll sin and sigh no more;
Behind us all of sorrow
And naught but joy before;
A joy in our Redeemer
As we to him are nigh
In the crowning day that's coming
Bye-and-bye."

A salvation army lassie succeeded in getting a drunkard on one occasion to sign the pledge against ever again using strong drink. When he had done so, he turned to her and said, "I suppose at headquarters you'll get half-a-crown when you report this pledge?" She replied, "We are better paid than that. I'll get a whole crown, and there will be stars in it."

Third. The time.

The disciples wanted to know when He would return, but He said unto them: "Of that day and hour knoweth no one, but what I say unto you all is: Watch."

A man was spending his vacation in the country with his wife and children. One day he had to go into the city, to his own sorrow, and the sorrow of the family. When he left he told his children: "I

will be coming back soon, and I want you to watch for me." The children never before showed such a liking for soap and water, and they went down to the station to meet every train, thinking that he might be on it. So the fact that we don't know when Christ will come suggests to us the idea of keeping clean, so that when He comes we shall be presentable.

A good many years ago, when the Connecticut legislature was in session, one day at noon it became so dark that the chickens went to roost. The people thought that the end of the world had come, and some member of the legislature moved an adjournment. Just then an old saint arose and said, "I know that many of you are of the opinion that the Judgment Day has arrived, and may be it has; but as our duties are always obligatory I move that instead of adjourning we send out for candles and proceed with the order of the day. If Christ comes today I want to be found at my post of duty."

And, friends, so may it be with us till Jesus comes.

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